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ABSTRACT

Elders and young members of the Dogrib Indian Tribe of Canada met in November 1990 to redefine the mission of their schools. In April 1989 the Dogrib Divisional Board of Education was established, giving local control of the schools back to the Dogrib people. Previously the schools were run by the government and staffed by teachers from the south, who used traditional Anglo teaching techniques. These meetings were conducted in the Dogrib language and later transcribed into English. The Dogrib people explain that the schools have failed to incorporate the Dene culture (the Indian nation of which Dogrib is a tribe). Young members can read and write but do not have survival skills, and do not know the history, language, and culture of their people. Members advocate an educational system that is built upon a foundation of Dogrib values, that integrates the knowledge and skills of both the Dogrib and English, and that recognizes parents as the first teachers of their children. The Dogrib Divisional Board of Education is committed to providing: (1) high expectations for knowledge and learning; (2) skills for work; (3) values to live by; (4) skills to live from the land; (5) respect for God; (6) respect for elders and community service; and (7) training in the Dogrib language. Appendices provide: (1) a transcript of Chief Jimmy Bruneau's (1881-1975) speech when the new school opened in 1972; (2) a diagram of the historical process of Indian education moving away from traditional culture; and (3) Dogrib Board of Education mission statement. (KS)

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"Strong Like Two People"

The development of a mission statement for the Dogrib Schools

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With special thanks to John B. Zoe who facilitated the meeting and Bill Hoggarth who assisted with the organization and the editing.

Transcribed from the Dogrib by Phillip Rabesca and Mary Siemens.
Edited by Jim Martin

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"I have asked for a school to be built...on my land...and that school will be run by my people, and my people will work at that school and our children will learn both ways, our way and the whitemens' way." ...Chief Jimmy Bruneau 1881-1975

"So if children are taught in both cultures equally, they would be strong like two people... What the Old Chief talked about is for some good time in the future. Today he didn't talk about everything, but it is good to reflect upon what he did say. He spoke as if though we are only one person, we can be two persons. He looked far ahead for us, and we gain from it." ...Elizabeth Mackenzie from the transcription of the meeting to develop a mission statement for the Dogrib Divisional Board of Education, November 14-15th, 1990 in the Friendship Centre, Rae-Edzo, N.W.T.

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Introduction

In April of 1989, the Honourable Stephen Kakfwi, the Minister of Education of the Northwest Territories declared that the five Dogrib communities of Dettah, Lac La Martre, Rae-Edzo, Rae Lakes and Snare Lake would be recognized by the government as a Divisional Board of Education. The Dogrib Divisional Board of Education was the culmination of seven years of effort by the Dogrib people to regain control of the education of their children. The communities inherited schools from the government, staffed largely by transient teachers from the south and modelled closely on the schools most familiar to those teachers. Significant change was desired by the community councils and a process began to redefine the schools to truly serve the wishes of Dogrib parents for the future of their children and their future as a people.

In the summer of 1989, the Dogrib Divisional Board of Education participated jointly with the Rae Friendship Centre and the Dogrib Tribal Council in the Roundrock Lake Cultural Project. This project presented an opportunity for people to meet in the barrenlands at the place where Edzo made peace with Akaitcho a century before. They came to look critically at where the Dogrib people had come from and where they were going. Education was discussed in the overall context of the life of the communities and from the written transcripts of this meeting consensual themes began to emerge regarding the proposed shape of education. The themes were presented to the Divisional Board at a meeting in Snare Lake in September of 1989 and it was agreed that a further meeting would be held in Rae-Edzo to validate the draft mission statement.

It was agreed that the Community Education Councils would choose a combination of elders and young people to attend this meeting. It was also agreed that the meeting would be conducted in a traditional manner, in Dogrib, with no translation and no professional educators present. John B. Zoe was asked to facilitate the meeting while the proceedings were recorded by Phillip Rabesca. Community representatives travelled to Rae-Edzo on Tuesday, November 13th 1990 and the meetings continued through Wednesday and Thursday. The recordings of the meeting were then transcribed into English by Phillip Rabesca and Mary Siemens, and edited by Jim Martin. The material was presented to the Dogrib Divisional Board of Education at a meeting in Dettah and officially approved as the mission statement, and goals on January 22nd, 1991.

It is a powerful evocation of the beliefs of people from the Dogrib communities. Some speak wistfully of a world uncomplicated by white people and their ways, some speak enviously of the young people who have learned to read and write, while others speak proudly of their own education. All speak eloquently and forcefully for the establishment of a new educational system, built upon a foundation of Dogrib values, that integrates the knowledge and skills of both worlds.

the editor

Transcriptions from the meeting

Wednesday, November 14th, 1990 in the Friendship Centre, Rae.

OPENING PRAYER BY JOHNNY EYAKFWO: We, the Dene are a pitiful people but we should not say how pitiful we are. Look how beautiful the sun shines, how beautiful the world is. We had nothing to do with it. Our Lord did the work and it is His beauty we see. Because of the beauty around us we should not think of how hard our lives are. We have a Lord, and that is why our situation is good.

We pray earnestly that our situation will be improved. Our prayers are not hidden from Him and we know that He hears us. What we pray for will not cause us real difficulties. That is the reason for our efforts.

We, the leaders including the councillors, board members, and those who work for the schools must think of all that the tasks ahead of us involve. Those of us who are Christians, if we can help others a little by what we say, good. That is the purpose for which we are working. We are not only working for ourselves but for the next generation, and ways which would benefit them. We work with tears which I'm sure are not hidden from our Lord, so if He helps us with this matter, good.

That is what we want, so now we are going to pray. Today, the Dene have gathered to hold a meeting and for this occasion I will sing one of my grandfather's songs.

Thank you my people for gathering here. We did not come to amuse ourselves, but to work for the future and for our children's future. This is what we are working for, which we hope will not be destroyed. If we pray with that good spirit given to us and improve our work here on earth, good. That is our purpose so now we will pray and I will sing one song for you. *Singing....*

PRAYER BY JOHN PIERRE MICHEL: Let us pray. My God, when Jesus lived on the earth, He said to us, "If you mention my name I will be in your midst." You are our God, and you have sent your son Jesus and the Holy Spirit to live among us. He loved us the way you loved us, and that is the way He lived among us. You are my God, we breathe by your Spirit and we are baptized by your Son's words. The people here have gathered to discuss important issues. The board members, councillors, and those in the working places all have gathered here. We ask that the Holy Spirit would fill their minds and hearts so that they would work well with each other. As we love You, let us love one another and for working well together we will pray five times. (Praying).

JOE PE'A: Thank you very much. The prayer is like the one held in Sahte, when we prayed on the rosary in Francis' house. We prayed that the people from Rae would be rewarded with good circumstances. It may not be due to our prayers alone, but today you are in a good situation. It is so true when we say the Word of God is powerful. We cannot omit the Word of God when we hold our meetings.

I just wanted you to be informed of the prayer we held for you.

JOHN B. ZOE: The Chief from Rae will give a short speech since this is his area. It is customary to let a leader from his own area speak.

EDWARD ERASMUS: Thank you. You, the board members from the communities of Rae-Edzo, Lac La Martre, Rae Lakes, Snare Lake, Yellowknife, and Dettah, have come to make decisions for the future education of the children. You are working for a good cause. Even for myself when we were young, we went to school but it was not like these days. We were never taught the Dene culture. Today that door is open to us. Today you are going to discuss schooling and the Dene culture for the future of our children who are growing among us now. This and how they will be taught.

We say we are pitiful. We, the Dene are not well educated but for myself, I think we are still strong because we have our Dogrib language. We are rich because of it. All around us in the other northern places and in the south, people such as the Cree are losing their languages. Today the Dogrib are still strong because of our language. We still speak Dogrib and our children still speak in the Dogrib language. In the future, maybe in twenty to forty years when our children begin to lose our language, it will be a difficult time for us. A great culture will be destroyed. We understand each other well in our own language. We can express ourselves and talk to each other because it is our own language. It doesn't belong to the English, nor the government; it belongs to us, the Dogrib people. That is important!

Now I am glad you have come. You have come to work on an important issue. You have come to make decisions which may be in existence for the next twenty years. When the old Chief was still a chief he asked for a school here. Today it is still standing twenty years later, even after his death. In the same way, today you are going to make significant events happen. You will make an important decision for the Dogrib language.

Will we be able to write it and will the future generations of our grandchildren speak in the Dogrib language? We don't know for sure. When we went to school we were taught only the English culture. When the teachers opened the books for the first time, everything was written in words. For those of us who lived at home, all those words were foreign.

At home we were taught to get up and make a fire in the morning. Those kinds of concepts were not written in those books. As young men, we were never taught the Dene language nor the Dene culture. This is why today the young people and the elders do not always want to go in the same direction.

In English we call it the generation gap. The young people do not understand the elders and the elders do not understand the young people. When we gather for a meeting, we argue with each other because we do not understand one another. That is the present condition among our people. So regarding our forefather's culture, we are not saying we will turn to the English completely nor are we saying we will adhere only to the Dogrib Culture.

In the future any Dene who have not gone to school will have a hard time. That's what will happen because it will not be the same as in the past. In the past, a person without education could live well as long as he worked well. But in the future, if a young person is not educated, their survival is doubtful. That is what will happen; that is how it is now. If we say no to English education, any young

person who has not completed grade twelve in the next forty years, will not get a job. That's the kind of future we are moving towards.

It is not like the past. There are more English people in our midst and they will take all the jobs from the Dene because they are very educated. If we the Dene do not send our children to school we will be poor in the future. I'm not saying we should only concentrate on being literate and forget the Dene way, but I believe the Dene culture must be written in books.

Young people do not know the history of the Dogrib people and how they lived because they are not taught these things. How did the Dene live twenty years ago? How did they travel by dogs and how did they hunt caribou? How do we butcher a caribou? How do we show respect to the caribou? None of the young people know such things. That is how it is now.

Today, more than half of the young people between the ages of eleven to twenty five are not literate. They cannot get jobs and more than half of them are not able to trap, so what do they do but sit in Rae. What can they do? They cannot get a job because they don't have enough education and they cannot go trapping because they don't have the necessary skills. So they are just in Rae not knowing what else to do. That is our situation today.

It is a terrible dilemma. We don't understand each other because we don't know the concepts, and haven't been taught the concepts. When we were young and going to school we were never taught the culture of our elders who lived among us. We were taught how the government in Ottawa worked and about the provincial governments, all about government matters, all about the written English language, but never about the history of how the Dogrib lived in the past. We were never taught about the Dogrib history. We had to teach ourselves by listening to our elders. That is how we got to know about these things. But today more than half of the youths in Rae do not know the Dogrib culture.

It is similar with the elders. They do not know about the latest decisions that have been made. It is obvious because we do not talk and teach each other and also because we do not understand each other. So you are here to plan a great educational task. You are the school board members for the Dogrib schools. You are making decisions as to how the Dogrib culture can be taught to the children in the future.

In English they call it "history". How did we survive as a Dogrib people? How did our forefathers and grandfathers live? What is our history to the present day? What will be our future? It would be good if the young people knew about our history.

Today, the young people have thrown away the traditions of the elders. They do not want to hear about them. That is the situation today and it cannot be tolerated any longer. We are the Dogrib people. We can't forget our language.

I know of this firsthand in my own house. My son is fourteen, my daughters twelve and eleven. When my wife and I were married we talked to them only in English, thinking that they will be going to school. I did the wrong thing for because of that my one son and my two daughters do not speak Dogrib. I don't like it. After these children, our last baby was born. She is two years old now. Today we speak only Dogrib to her. I realize that now. Since we have only

spoken Dogrib to her for two years, her two sisters and brother want to speak Dogrib now. They can easily learn Dogrib because they are still children. So young, married people like myself should speak Dogrib to our children. If we speak to them in Dogrib in our home, we will not lose our language. That is what happened to all our young men. Our children do not understand Dogrib. This is why I say our language is important.

We speak to our youngest two year old daughter only in Dogrib, so now, she does not understand us when we speak to her in English. She can easily pick up English when she goes to school. That was how we started school ourselves as until the age of six, we never spoke a work of English and today we have no problem speaking English. I have told a lot of young men to speak to their children in Dogrib while they are small and growing up in the home.

I am very glad that you leaders have come to work on this important issue. It is good to help each other when we work on an important matter such as this so we will be effective and our decisions will be the stronger for it. If we help each other and support each other by discussion, we will be strong for the work.

I just want to say thank you for coming here to work on behalf of the education of our children and to mention the things I wanted to say.

JOHN B. ZOE: When the school opened the Old Chief (Chief Jimmy Bruneau 1881-1975) made a speech on teaching the children both the Dogrib culture and the English culture. Last week a video tape of his short speech given about eighteen years ago was found. We will listen to his speech and discuss what will be taught to the children in the future.

We are here to make decisions about the future of our childrens' education. Unlike twenty years past, there are schools in all five communities. So now representatives from the five communities have gathered for discussion. The Dogrib Divisional Board of Education wants you to make decisions that can be put in the curriculum to teach the children. We are not talking just about the Rae-Edzo School Society. The issue we are talking about has many other things involved with it. We will watch a video tape of Chief Jimmy Bruneau's short speech and then we will discuss what he said.

(The group watched the videotape of Chief Jimmy Bruneau opening the new Edzo school in 1971.)

JOHN B. ZOE: That was the extent of his speech at the opening ceremony of the new Chief Jimmy Bruneau School in Edzo. We are holding our meetings in Dogrib since there is no English person among us. Later, the person who is recording the meeting will transcribe our words in written English form for the board members, but our meetings here will be in Dogrib. The people don't like to use translators. They said they cannot understand each other and will not attend because of it. The report of this meeting can be read another time in English.

Since we will be making decisions for the five communities, it would be good to base our discussion on the Old Chiefs' short speech. Some of you elders may have known him personally and heard him talk many times. We are interested in his other words as well. The main concern of this speech was that the children will not lose their Dene culture in their future education. So the floor is open to anyone who

wants to say something. We will record any ideas that come out of your discussion, so the floor is open to anything you want to say.

LOUIS WHANE: You are right, concerning this matter. I used to live at his house until I returned to the barrens. Sometimes in the evening he would talk to me about the school. He said, "My nephew, it doesn't seem I will live long on this earth, but according to my words, a school will be established in Edzo. It will be done. Once the school is established the children are not to be taught only English culture. This was not my request. They are to be taught half in English and half the Dene traditions. It is the only way we can keep our traditional life. How will the young people of future generations fare? When the boys are big enough their fathers will teach them", he said. "Their fathers will take them out trapping, making camp, butchering caribou and show them how to skin a caribou which is like going to school. As for the girls it would be better if they get a good education", he said. "That is why I have begun to press for a school", he said. That's what he would say to me when I stayed at his house. "If he (the student) concentrated only on English and books for his education, would he be able to hunt and kill an animal? Can he make a fire before it's too late? To prevent that kind of accident the school should teach both ways of life so we can be strong people, travelling together into the future", he said. "Don't let the young people lose any of their Dogrib culture, their elders' culture, which is why I pressed so hard for a school", he said. Every time I came from the barrens I stayed at his house. When I went back to the barrens we would go back together. In the evenings he would tell me his stories. What the Chief said here (on video), why should we disobey? If we disobey, it would be hard for us.

If one has a family, the father directs his son and the mother the daughter. If a son is able to look after himself his father takes him along on many trips. If we taught him the skills of survival, it is like having gone to school. If he is able to survive on his own, in the cold, he will be able to make his own camp, and be able to hunt. But if the boy is not taught, how will he survive? Not long ago a boy was allowed to go trapping with me. He left with me after Christmas. I'm not joking. When we made camp and cooked some meat he didn't eat any. Then we left for the trap lines past Germain Lake, where my son and I had our traps. In the evening, I told him to cut four dry wood while we set up the tent. He was out there while we put up the tent and assembled the stove. I called for him as he was cutting, "What is taking you so long? I just wanted four logs". He came back with two green spruce. I said "What is the green wood for? I told you where to cut the dry wood I wanted, but what are these?" I said to him. My son was very angry."Don't you have a dad to teach you? Doesn't he talk to you every evening? I don't think your father raised you," I told him. If things go wrong for him, he doesn't know how to make a fire, he would freeze in front of his own eyes. Over half the young men are like that. That is why when one has a son at an age when he is starting to hunt, we hang on to him by taking him on many trips.

I'm not bragging about my son whom I have adopted. Since he was young, I have taken him out with me. I take him trapping so he can help set up the tent. I would tell him to be careful when he puts a log in the fire. Then I would go out to set my traps in their place by the river while he stayed behind in the tent. Then I would check on him. Today if he is caught in terrible conditions, he is able to survive. If he kills an animal he is able to butcher it and if he traps an animal he is able to skin it. You are right when you say these skills are gone in most of our young people.

That is why we should not lose our Dogrib culture and language. It is the very name of our elders so why should we throw it away. It is better to teach our children our traditions.

When children get a "good education" that enables them to work in a store and become "somebody", they do not remember the skills we have taught them in the past. Then we hear the bad news that they steal. Today we hear a lot about that.

As for the girls, if they are well educated and work in the store, they can make money for their parents. But it is better for the boys to be able to set a trap in these days. After he comes back from trapping, he can attend school for a few days then go back to the bush to help his parents.

It is true what you say about our culture. If we speak to our children only in English and they do not understand Dogrib, what can they do? Even though they are conscious of themselves, they would still freeze to death. It is true this is what has become of our young people. We are far from what Chief Bruneau has told me our schools should be. I agree with what you are trying to do.

The girls should be educated and be able to work in the stores. They will make money for their parents. The boys can go to school in the summer and we (the parents) can teach them Dogrib culture during the trapping seasons. They will live in a Dene Culture and their minds will become strong. They will not only want to do useless things like drinking and gambling.

The day will come when they will ask their dads and say, "Dad, I used to work well with you, let's go quickly to the land". My son asked me that many times. Now it is far from what Chief Bruneau talked about.

When I stayed in his home before he died, he pulled a chair up for me to talk about the school. "In the future there will be a different lifestyle," he said " While I'm living things are peaceful. After I'm buried, there will be no more peace in this land. People will be scattered all over." I'm not saying it is like that now but the parents of the young people whom the Chief was speaking about, think that they have come to that point. Thank you; that's all I wanted to share with you.

JOE PE'A: There are lots of people here who may want to say a few words, so we cannot talk too long. We are using each other's speech as a guide to speak correctly. We cannot forget the Dene culture. It is not because we have given up on it. We want our children to learn the Dogrib culture and the Word of God, which we never hold our meetings without remembering.

I'm very glad that they want to teach the children the Dogrib culture. When I was a young man I heard the Chief talk about a school. He said, "I don't want my people's children to go over the lake to Resolution on an old plywood boat, so a school in Edzo is going to be built for them". He didn't talk too long on it but his words were powerful so a school was built in Edzo and there are now schools in the five Dogrib communities.

Chief Monfwi lived and after him Chief Jimmy Bruneau. He didn't speak English but through a translator he made a decision which is still in existence today. Those two didn't speak English but their decisions about the school and our culture are still with us. The Old Chief used to say through a translator, "Our words are

powerful". It has been a long time since the Old Chief died but we still remember his words.

Some people say those who can't speak English cannot always have translators. You probably have heard all that and there was talk about doing away with our ancestors' culture. But today, we want our children to know both cultures so we are talking about it again. If our children learn both cultures well, we will be rewarded by our Lord. It would be good.

I have mentioned in past meetings the one small sculpture of the Chief's head. I told the principal that if the school board requested, they could make a full body sculpture of him but none of the school boards supported me. If it was done, it would be good and would give strength to our words, but they still have not mentioned it. If it is to be done, it should be done quickly. If we support each other on anything, it gives strength to our words. If the sculpture is made, all the important English leaders will respect it when they see it. Today, while the Dene are meeting, we should have a short discussion on it and come to an agreement . It could be set up in the school in Edzo or maybe in the new school here (Rae) . We also said it would be good to send the sculpture to the grade twelve graduation in the future. For now it can stand in the school. In the five communities it will symbolize our strength as a Dogrib nation. I think it would be good if we support each other about it. We cannot talk too long since there are others who may want to say a few words. That's all that is on my mind, and which I wanted to speak about.

JOHNNY EYAKFWO: What was discussed is true. I have never been involved with the school board except a long time ago. Today I asked to be with them since there was no one else to go with the other delegates from Snare Lake. Even though I am not a member of the school board I have heard what people say and sometimes I have walked in on school meetings and listened to their discussions.

Today, when I think of what is being said, the ways have truly changed. We say we want our children educated in the modern way of life and in the way of life the Dene lived a long time ago; the survival way of life. When we look at them, they seem to be two separate things. There seems to be a gap there. We are talking today about what can draw them together. After they have drawn together and touched each other how can we use them equally? That is the issue we are discussing today.

After we have further discussed it and made a decision on it then the meeting will do what it was intended to. Our words will be like the Old Chief's words and we will be confirming the decision that was made in the past. This is the reason why we came here and we don't want to leave anything out. We seem to be talking in circles but if someone speaks with words we don't remember it looks as if we will be speaking on it again in today's meeting.

By listening to what was said at past school board meetings, and to what the Old Chief said, we realize our present situation. It's like we have been asleep, and upon awakening, hearing the words again today. Take ourselves for example. We who are sitting here are not educated by books. If we are told to go to the Dene culture or the English culture, which one are we going to go with? We, the elders are going to go to the Dene culture, not the English culture, because we don't understand it. We don't want our children in the future to be like us. We want them to work the same in both cultures. If they do, they will work well towards the decision that was made long ago. That is what we are discussing today.

Once we speak in the presence of the children and teach them, it will be their responsibility. When we have talked to them clearly and they have been taught both Dene and English cultures completely, it will be up to themselves. It will be their fault if they become poorer for not acting on our words. I am glad we are holding a meeting to prevent that. I just want to say that much to you.

HARRY SIMPSON: You have all spoken well. We, too have listened to the meetings they held in the past. Alphonse Quitte and I have been involved with the school board for eight years. We took last year off and this year we were reelected. From what I remember, the people here are speaking truthfully.

About two years ago when we were with the school board, it was directed only towards the English way, and that is how we used to talk about education. Since the regional board was formed last year, I heard them talk about that, even though I wasn't involved with them, but today when we think about it, the Chief was right. Even the English people seem to hold to the idea.

There are still many Dogrib living and if they lose their language, the English people think it will be a terrible mistake. That is their present opinion, which is true. For example, a lot of young kids do not know how to work in the bush, which is just what the Chief said. This cannot be tolerated. In our area the teachers have said to teach the children half in the Dogrib language and half in English is good. I think they may be right. All the things that Louis talked about are a reality for us as well. So the purpose for which we are meeting is good. Anyone can say what they want for we cannot be quiet.

It is a big issue. The children and babies that are growing now will be our future. Our old people are dying. I'm sure you know about them. That's what happens when one generation replaces another generation.

I have no children of my own, but I have raised six children. Sometimes I teach them the words of God that I have been taught, but they don't know what I'm talking about. Only two of them seem to understand me. They used to go with me to the bush all the time. After they learned the skills they didn't pay any attention to me. I suppose it is because we are teaching our children after us.

What my brother Louis here said is true. For the future, I think it will be good if we consider schooling half in the Dogrib culture and half in the English culture.

The day before yesterday the elders visited me at my house and said to me, "Why is it since last year the English people themselves are talking about the half English and half Dene way of education?" The young ladies on the staff, councillors and band members do not pay attention to what the elders say. They said the culture of the past is to be done away with and we will begin another culture. That's what they said. "They must not have been telling the truth", said the elders.

It is true that at this present time we love our Dene culture. We are discussing it because we don't know if it will survive us in our children.

When we see a man working we tell our children " Observe his work, and maybe go and watch him. In the future if you work like him and know what to do, it may be valuable to you". That is the right thing to do but I also tell them it is up to the individual. We don't go to the bush with our sons any more. What are they going

to do when they outlive us? If it turns cold what are they going to do? They don't know the Dene culture; they know a little English but the English culture is not good enough, even though it is important.

At this meeting we are discussing whether we should be teaching our children half in both cultures. We are poor now because we don't understand English, but if our children go to school it will be because of us. We can send them to school if they are not going out hunting or trapping, but if we don't care about them it's like thinking it is alright if they are poor. It is only when we have good intentions that the Dene will succeed.

If we ask a teacher if we can take our son out to the bush they will say, "Yes, you teach him; it is like going to school." They say this is written in the books now. That's the right way.

Take this meeting for example; it is the Dene way. The drumming and prayers which my brother gave us are very important. It is the one way by which we live. If our children learn to pray it would serve them well.

This idea and all other words seem to be mixed with other things, but whatever ways are right, we will try to organize them in our schools. That is why we have come here. We have come to work on an important issue. It takes a long time for people to come to a decision for themselves. We all can help each other make a decision that will be very important by discussing what we believe.

I thought of the same idea as my friend Joseph. When the school was built in Edzo, I heard my grandfather's words (Chief Jimmy Bruneau). He said the Dene are not being transported by boat a long way south of the lake just to die. Some of the young people there had the sickness (tuberculosis). He probably said that because some were worried about their relatives. He said a school will be built here so the Dene will not have to travel a long way over the lake. There will be a school here for them as I have spoken.

I heard him say that. Today the school is in existence. It has been in existence now for eighteen years and many young people have completed their education. They are not going far away to school anymore and the smart ones have finished. That is very important. I have travelled to the various meetings and they say that those who are not educated will not find a job. That is a different path, but the Dene will have to be educated.

I have questioned the teacher regarding Dogrib culture in places like Rae Lakes, Snare Lake and Dettah. Bill is his name; he stayed with us two days. We met together in my house. We discussed ways that would benefit us and he agreed with us. What Louis Whane talked about is true. He said if we follow the course of our suggestions we will be effective. We each need to discuss our own small part for us all to be informed. Therefore we cannot be silent. We may want to discuss it at a later time, but that may never happen. We should all contribute two or three short stories, depending on what the speaker ahead of us says. If everyone speaks, it will give strength to our words and will recall the teaching of our elders.

In this present age it is important for us to listen to our elders. We can talk about them and their words when discussing other topics. Those who have worked a long time, and have many experiences are like those who are very educated. There must be many such people who can share their varied experiences.

We have a deep commitment to the Dene language. If the people are not able to bring their children to the bush, they can be sent to schools among the Dene. With the funding that is available, we will teach the children many bush skills. Maybe they will learn skills such as setting nets, making a camp fire and sleeping overnight in the bush.

In the past, life was simpler and slower paced because we used dogs, even though it was cold. But now there is a different lifestyle, the skidoo mentality. If a skidoo stops suddenly in the middle of a lake what is the driver going to do? He doesn't know how to make a camp fire and he will be walking a long way with his hands in his pockets. Even though he reached the bush he would not survive. The very idea is foolish.

And, as my friend Joseph said about our grandfather, having his picture on the wall will make any one who sees it think about our Lord, and to keep going.

That's all I want to say, Masi.

ALPHONSE QUITTE: Masi, Masi. We came here because we heard that the meeting would be in the Dene language. Whenever someone speaks we should speak as one voice. There are no bad words in our discussion, only good words. We came here to share with each other. We the Dene people, what do we know? We don't know anything, but now we are sharing the stories of the elders before us. They are good stories.

You are right about the education of the children. The very first time when the children from Rae went to Resolution, before Elizabeth here, my name was written down to go with them. But my father, even after my name was written down, said I was not going. I told him, "What are you saying? My name is written down to go!" He said, "You are not going, your older sister can go but you are not going. Who is going to work with me in the bush? Since you are going to work in the bush with me, you are not going". I didn't go then and now after all that time I remember that. When I hear the children speaking English I have thought I should not have obeyed my father's command.

Elizabeth there, tells us the Bible stories. Had I gone to school, I would have also spoken them. Why did my father have to say no? Now I regret it and today I am grateful for the education of the children. In the future if they are not educated, we have heard they will not find a job.

You say we should teach the Dene culture equally with the English culture. You have said the right thing. If we plan to put the Dogrib culture on one side and the English culture on the other side, then this decision will not be changed in the future. I'm grateful for that.

All of us here have worked with our fathers and know their skills. As for the white culture, it seems to be a separate thing. So if it is like that, what will life be like in the future? If that is so, then there will be a big problem in the future, because the two cultures cannot seem to come together but are two separate paths on which we live. This will go on and on. Will it be good for us in the future? It will not be good for us. These days the elders are passing away. Who will direct us; who will tell us stories? We who are here, if we don't talk to each other, there will be no one. Before that happens it is right to hold a discussion like this.

You also talked about the word of God which is an important topic. Don't we teach the children how they can pray? Otherwise, they wouldn't know how to make the sign of the cross. That is the white culture, but in the Dene culture we cannot live without prayers. We cannot do without, that's what I think. I am grateful you are going to include them, too. I'm glad you are discussing including the word of God.

We will not always live with our young people. In the future when we are gone, if we have taught them to pray, they may be able to pray. It cannot be overlooked that these days a lot of young people do not pray. They do not pray because many young people have crossed over to the English culture. It cannot be tolerated. We want to be united as a people; we want them to come back to us . This is what we want to discuss together here in this meeting.

We are not going to live forever. Our relatives are passing away. They are not dying only because of disease. We have realized that. There are other unnecessary things in this world by which our people are dying. It cannot go on, my people. For that reason, we have a Lord.

If we are united in our decisions it might work out well for us. In the future if it turns out well for the children, then good. If we make a decision from all our discussions I think it would be good. If we meet like this we should keep making decisions to improve our lives in the future.

That was what I want to express to you. We work for what is right, not for the wrong things. We want to make good decisions together, that's what we want. That is the purpose of our meeting. Thank you very much for the chance to say a few words to express my views. That is all I wish to say.

JIMMY B. RABESCA: We have discussed education for many years and today we speak again about the traditions of our elders. Once again after many years we listen to the words of the Old Chief. Now is the time we can really think well about it. Today I heard once again what he spoke in my presence for many years. I do not want to do other than what he said. The Dene culture is the right way. God made the earth so we can live on it in the traditional way. That is why we say we will not let go of our culture, which is the work of our elders.

As for these schools and our children, we are doing the right thing. We the parents of the children, have to teach them so they can live right and work well in this world. We must teach them because they will not turn out well if somebody else teaches them for us. That is why we have children. Today we are talking about education to improve our lives. It is as though we have received something good from the television today. It is like that if we really think about it. It is open to us today.

Even though Chief Jimmy Bruneau didn't understand English, his speech and his strong ideas are still in existence in Edzo. We have never paid any attention to them before. Our fathers taught all of us who are in attendance at this meeting. They didn't teach us by pampering us and serving us our food. Not at all. Sometimes they were harsh by making us work hard but that is how they taught us. Today we thank them for teaching us that way. That is how we should teach our children.

Regarding the bush skills, the year before last, a whiteman visited me in Lac La Martre and ate at my house. He said, " Later when things in the world get very bad and when even people who have a good education cannot find work, we the white people will envy you the Dene, because your fathers have taught you the skills." He told me not to throw away old shoes and old axes; to keep two or three mongrel dogs and take good care of them. "On that day we the white people will envy you because we don't know the skills", he said. "You watch and see if I am right. On the day when things get bad, money will be worth nothing. Those who set nets, those who keep fish hooks in the water and those who know how to make camp will be the only ones living well." Those are the skills we have been talking about for I don't know how many years.

Today I am thinking about what the Old Chief said, shown here on the television. He was not there because he was educated, but he spoke as if he understood English and knew how to read. It is as if he arose from the dead and is sitting here at the table talking again. This is why when we think about how we live in this world we think far ahead, and that way maybe we can benefit others. In the same way we are to talk to our children.

We should work with them in the bush; teach them where to place the nets, where to find many fish in the lake; where to put down fish hooks, where we can find good trees, where we can find good animals by which to live. All of these things are to be told to our children. In this way we are to work in the bush with our children. We are right to be talking about this to each other.

We mentioned that our elders and our young people have separated. This is true. We are separated far from each other in our culture. It is right to say we want to get back together. If those of us who live in one place don't support each other, it will not be easy. It is good only if we help each other. If our parents are not alive we have to listen to those who are not our mother and father. We have to listen to our older brother. When our parents are not alive, we have to listen to the elders, even though the elder is not our father or our mother. We have to respect those people by word and attitude. We haven't yet benefited from our own experiences. If we keep their words well, we will save ourselves through them. They relate to us their experiences of how they lived and worked.

We cannot turn only to the whiteman's way. I don't want to lose the Dene tradition. Which will last longer, the English culture or the Dene culture? We have to think about that, too. Our children may not agree with us here, but we should always discuss the Dene culture in the school. It's not wrong to continue talking about it. Today what kind of news do you hear? What are the people talking about; what do you see happening? You are aware of it; we know all about it.

How are we going to improve our lives if we are always poking our heads above the crowd, selfish and not respecting other people's opinions, but wanting to be our own boss? How are we going to improve our situation? How is God going to help us? We don't know, so we are talking to each other before that happens.

Right now I see Elizabeth there, I heard about how she went to Rae Lakes and did a good job for the people using the Bible. We are grateful to her, though we didn't directly tell her.

Regarding education, our purpose is to give our children a good life in this world. In the past we used to talk only of the English culture, but now for two years we

are talking again about the Dene culture. It would be good if we kept going ahead with it instead of backwards. If we don't go backwards and if we work together well, everything we worked for will turn out well. Those who live in Dettah, Snare Lake, Rae Lakes and Rae-Edzo, should all work together and by helping each other we can do good work , which is why we came here to make a decision.

When I think of it I'm very glad you finally let us hold our meeting without the presence of any whitemen. We are supposed to hold our meetings like that. They are the leaders over us, so whatever we say they are supposed to listen to us. Today I'm glad we are meeting without them.

Right now, even though our children are going to school, we are preparing to go to the bush when we go back home. Every day we teach them the skills they need to work for themselves. That's what we are preparing for. We are right to be discussing that kind of life. In the future when we are gone, our children will be able to set a trap, camp over night, put fish hooks in the water and set the net. That is the goal we want, so we take them out on the land and it is the reason for our discussion.

I will be glad if we make good decisions before we leave. When we arrive home those of us who are members of the school board will tell others what took place here. Our chairperson will read the report and tell us about it. Those at home will think about it. I will be grateful sitting at the table if God helps us by letting us have the same intentions. We speak out of our pitiful circumstances. I'm beginning to think a little more seriously after I heard the words of the Old Chief again. When I reexamine it I think to myself, why didn't I pay attention to it? That is why we don't drink liquor, so we can remember today whatever we said in the past five or six years. In the same way the Old Chief has spoken again to us. If you think seriously about his words and discuss it with each other and make decisions on it once and for all, then go home, I will be glad.

We will be speaking every day on it and right now all our words are recorded. Whatever is not correct they will leave out. So they choose from our speech whatever is right. This is how we are holding our meeting.

We may not be saying the right things, but we have travelled here to state our views. We are not saying that person is not doing a good job, nor are we saying we are better than him, nor are we saying we are smarter than he is; we are here to teach each other.

When we were young, we listened to our parents. Now we are sitting in their places. The children who are growing now will replace us at the discussion table when we are gone. Those who would become Chief will speak in our place to the people. That is how generation after generation replaces one another. It is possible only through teaching each other.

Today we have travelled here to discuss education and if we discuss the issues well together, make good decisions, and then go home, I will be grateful. That's all I want to say to you.

JOHN PIERRE MICHEL: Yes, that is the reason for this gathering. It is like one idea to me and what Joe Pe'a said is the truth to me.

When we saw the Old Chief again we all remembered working with him. Even myself, I worked with him for many years. We all heard him speak in our presence and saw him. He did great work for us for he wanted better conditions for the Dene. I also agree with Joe Pe'a that we should make a motion to have a statue stand in the school. I will be glad if you make a motion saying that we will work so as not to lose our culture.

JOHN B. ZOE: We are using what the Old Chief said to guide our discussion. When Louis was talking, it seemed the Old Chief was saying as long as he lived life would be the same as before. The children will learn the bush skills of hunting, setting nets, and other self reliance skills by which they will help themselves in the future. That is how people used to teach each other. Trees for example; if we tell him to cut a tree but he doesn't know what tree to cut; it is like teaching him a concept. What is the name of the lake they are travelling on? What lake is good for fishing? Through the Dogrib language a little of all the legends are taught to the children. We don't talk to them directly, but they learn by observation the way the Dene taught each other in the past. The Dene always watched and cautioned each other. As someone mentioned here, when a fire is burning he told his boy to be careful and not to fall into the fire, even that in itself is a big concept. They are taught carefully and not rushed because we can't have a careless attitude in this world, so I guess they are taught that kind of concept, too.

It is not easy for a doubtful person in the cold conditions. He has to learn to be strong willed, work well for himself and be able to walk long distances. It may be cold and hard but he has to put up with the hardship.

When the Old Chief spoke, he said no one gave him the idea of getting a school, he thought about it himself. When he talked about it again, he said it was based on the tradition of his father, uncle and older brother and that he asked for a school on their words. He didn't talk long but when we understand his words he spoke about a lot of things. He was sick, so he couldn't speak for a long time, but the short speech he gave will cause others to speak on it later on.

He said the government people sitting behind him must agree with what he is talking about, because they didn't say no to what he said in the past. He said if the children are educated by the school he requested, they may get more schools. That has happened already; there are schools in all your communities. Now the schools are here according to his plan.

We are the schools' leaders. The five communities are meeting here to talk about how the children are to be educated in the future and how to make decisions, so that we can always see the Old Chief's words in what we are moving towards. The way children are to be taught in the future should be based on his words so that we may be strong as a people. Today, some people have said, our way of life is far from the way the Dene used to live because we have been teaching each other only the English culture. Sometimes the young people these days want to do something else, even the Old Chief realized this. We thought that teaching the children only in the English culture would be good, but when the people started talking in the meetings we began to think about ourselves. The people think we may be making a mistake. When they talked to their children in Dogrib again, changes began to happen. If we don't talk to each other, the people will go backwards.

So today, there is a big difference in the way our elders lived in the past and the way the young people live today. We have a different way of life because they

grew up only in the communities. They don't know how the people used to hunt in the past. I suppose some have jobs, work and receive a little money, but not all of them. Some of the children growing up here know a little bit of the Dene culture but not enough, and with that, they know a little of the English culture but not enough, because they have not completed school. They don't really know where they are going in either culture. They don't have any idea.

They don't know where the trails are, which areas are good for fish, how to take care of nets. How will they survive without the strong minds that come from learning these skills. They will just end up hanging around town. They can't turn to the white way or to the Dene way. Jimmy here is right when he said they will have no idea what to do.

If a person has no idea of what to do in their life, they will get involved with unimportant things like alcohol and drugs. Every bad thing in this world can be seen in our communities. Maybe the young people have acted that way because we spoke to them in English or because they saw people staggering around town. They might think it is the normal way. As well maybe they have seen us using each other's words to abuse each other when we are talking about important issues. So they even fight each other if they want to. They use bad language and swear. We also hide information from each other and so every bad thing gets mixed in with what they young people learn from us.

The old people's tradition and the way of life now, is far apart because we don't understand each other. So how can we prevent this loss of our culture and how will we look into the school curriculum and make it stronger for us? That is the issue they want us to talk about. There are now school board members from the five communities. They are to decide what is going to happen based on what the Old Chief said, and their words will be written down as a guide for our goals. That's the reason for our meeting. If the Old Chief's ideas can be seen, even the teachers you have hired will work for them. They will use his ideas as a guide and follow them in their work. If there are funds available, money will be spent on those ideas. A mission statement will be made so that everything done in our schools will be affected by it.

As of today and since all the five communities came together, that statement has not been made yet. Some of it was written but some people say it was not written up completely. After the statement of our goals is written down, it is not meant to be changed every day.

There are a lot of elders here. We may want to change the mission statement to make it better, but it will not be better because people replace each other and do not think in the same way. So those who knew the Old Chief's words and understood the reason why he spoke like that should be heard, so that the people left behind will turn to it.

Only by speaking do we find words of truth. If a person doesn't talk, if nothing comes out of him, we will not be able to write down anything. Everyone has something to offer. We start to see things when we share with each other. In the past when someone killed an animal, he didn't think of himself but he shared with all his relatives, so they could all be strong, and no one would suffer. Everyone took care of each other; this is the kind of idea we are talking about. It is like everyone came back from a hunt and is sitting together. It is sharing and something great can be made.

It is almost 12:00 o'clock so if you want to come back after 1:00, it's alright. After we come back we will look at the video again. Then we can talk again. Is this alright with you? We have just started, so whoever didn't speak can do so after 12:00. Until then you may want to talk about the Old Chief's words.

There are two cafes in town. Up toward the bush a lot of white men are working on a school. If we wait until 12:00 all the cafes are full, so we can't eat there. If we don't finish before 12:00, all the white people will rush in and we will have to wait for each other. So it would be good if you ate all the goodies before them! So will it be alright if we come back before 1:00?

(All say "yes".) Lunch Break

JOHN B. ZOE: When the Old Chief spoke, he said if our people educate themselves in this Edzo school, he would request there be schools all over. I guess this is what he meant. That is why there are schools in all the Dogrib communities.

Now that there are schools all over, we are looking for a way to teach the children. We will look at ways to teach the children today building upon ways they were taught in the past. All these decisions are still before us yet. In the future the teachers will use the mission statement as a guide to teach the children. Today we are trying to find ways to make a report. We can find these ways only by talking to each other, so for those who didn't talk but want to do so, the floor is open.

HELEN TOBIE: The bush skills are not being taught to the children even though they are important. It would be good if they were taught half in English and half in the Dene traditions. Then they will know how we lived but it they are taught only in English, they will know how to work only in the white way.

Some kids have a good education but they don't know how to work in the bush. The boys don't know which trees are good for firewood, nothing. It is right to teach those skills. The girls are the same. They don't know how to do things in their own homes but when they are in school they can write it all down. When they are in the homes, they don't know how to cook. Only when they buy meat from the stores do they know how to cook it, but if a caribou was killed for them, and the meat brought in, they would just look at it, because they don't know what to do with it. They don't know how to cook, that is also how it is. If their mothers taught them, they would know it, tanning hides and preparing meat, all that kind of work.

Today if you ask a girl to sew, they don't know what to do because they don't sew. If their relatives taught them they would know, but if we taught them they would tell us how it is done in the white culture. They don't want to touch these things, but if the boys and girls are not taught in the Dene culture, they will be the poorer for it.

It will be that way because everything is getting expensive. Right now it is getting colder and for the cold weather we might make hats, but they don't know how to make even that. If they don't have enough money they cannot buy anything. It would be good if they taught those kinds of things. Even ourselves, if our mothers are working on something, we work with them. We may not work as hard as they do, but we work with them just the same; by doing that we get to know the

work. Even if we don't go to school but pay more attention to those kinds of work, we would be living well. The young women are not doing that, so some don't even know how to keep house in their own homes.

Even if they had children they wouldn't know how to clothe them. They only buy clothes for their children from the stores. They will not make something by themselves and put it on their children. Their children will freeze in their presence and they will let it happen. That is how the young girls are growing up. It would be nice if we can teach them but they don't want to obey us. That is a struggle too.

I never went to school at all. I wanted to go to school but my grandfather said no. The children were kept well in Fort Resolution. I asked in vain, but he said I wasn't going at the time when the children were going to school. That is why I don't know how to read. Today though, because I helped my mother I cannot say I don't know how to do that kind of work, because I can.

Our mother is the one who teaches us if she is still with us. If our mother is not alive another lady who knows how to work well will teach if we ask her, if she pities others. That's how we learn. When I was ten my mother was in the hospital for two years. At that time there was no one to teach me and I didn't know how to cook or to housekeep. It was really hard on me, as I grew up like an orphan. There were other girls my age who showed me how to do things. That's how I really learned to do my work.

Our parents are not the only ones who can teach us. There may be other young girls who work well and if we go to them we can learn through them. That is the way it is. Then I was in the hospital for two years. When I went in I didn't understand any English, so there were young girls there and I sat with them while they were learning English and I started to repeat what they said. That's how I learned to speak English.

We have to work hard to teach ourselves, but even though it is hard just learning for one day, we are doing something good for ourselves. If we obey our parents it is also good. Now when we teach them, some say to us that even that is now part of the whiteman's culture because it is not like your culture of the past. That's what they tell us when we teach them.

This is not true for what was our culture will always be our culture. In the past, we have taught each other well and if we lived that way, we would live well but the young people are not like that. The white people do all kinds of crazy things with us. Every Friday they would announce on the radio what time would be good for dancing and they would all talk on the radio about it and we would believe them. That is what they are after and it's going crazy for us.

They will destroy us with that. It is no good. Many young people have gone crazy because they get involved with such unimportant things. Some young people want to talk only in the English language even to their parents. They don't understand each other in the English language so they only say swear words; they don't know why they are doing it, so they become tempermental. If they were a little more careful with their words and if the people corrected them more on their bad language it would not have happened. They throw away their own language and speak mostly in the English language. It is not good. We speak aimlessly in it. It would have been good if it was not so. Even us, if we don't speak in English and if they did the same it would be good. If they understood and spoke the Dene

language, they would be better at it. The little boy that we are raising didn't speak a word of English until he entered school. As soon as he entered school he began to speak only in English. I asked him, "Why are you speaking only in English, you never used to do that?" But he wouldn't listen. I don't know why they are throwing their language away. I don't like that; it would be better if they were not like that.

If they don't know their language they will not learn our culture. It is that way and it is not good. So to not lose their language and to go to the bush with their parents to teach themselves would be good. It would also be good if they knew the Dene culture and the English culture in the same amount. It would be good if they were taught that way. That's all I want to say about it.

JOE PE'A: You are right. In the past, the Dene lived only in the Dene culture. They travelled only by dogs. Our parents would set up a tent and we would watch all the work they did. Since we used only dogs to travel in the bush we, like myself, knew the bush skills. That is true. Today, it is not like that, the Dene way of life is disappearing. The people are losing their dogs. They only travel by skidoos and people do not walk with snowshoes. Government houses are made for the people like in Rae; it is like that even in Snare Lake. So we don't take our children out in the bush and we don't walk with snowshoes. Our children are big but can they walk with snowshoes? It was not like that before. Our parents worked with dogs and used snowshoes. There were spruce boughs to cut and tents to set up on the snow. That's how our parents worked with us and that is why we know the skills. But today it is not like that. We don't take our children to the bush so how can they learn the skills? Children are going only to the school.

Not long ago a girl came this way from Edzo, past Comb Island where she couldn't make a fire, so she froze to death. Using that for an example, we cannot turn only to the white culture. It would be good if our children were taught more of the Dene culture, especially the boys. As for the girls, if they are educated well in English, able to make a fire and know a little of Dene culture, then they would be useful. They have to have that knowledge.

When a new speech like this is discussed it will not be completed at one sitting. A big speech like this has to be discussed two or three times before it finally becomes good. From the tape recorder whatever is good and important will be picked out and used. We are not talking about the white culture, only the Dene culture. Whoever knows about the Dene culture and how it should be made for our benefit should speak out a little about it, since there are no white people here and we understand each other well. We are here to discuss the good Dene culture.

JIMMY NITSIZA: I am going to speak to you for a while. Though I am not a member, the school board in Lac La Martre asked me to come to this meeting. What the school board said is true. If we don't help each other we will not know anything. Right now what you are saying about the Dene culture is true.

I myself worked with my father a long time ago. I remembered everything my father said to me. At that time we suffered from hard work and a lack of things our family needed to live well. We grew up poor. I remember at that time when we worked in the bush we were so poor that we lived only on fish. At that time my father said to me, "My son, you are poor right now working with me in the bush, but someday you will have your own family. When you have your own family you will work the way I do now. When that time comes, you will begin to work well.

Right now, even though you are catching a lot of furs, you will not be the boss of the fur money. If you become the boss of the fur money you will go wrong, thinking the money is yours. You will not obey me." He was right.

But now sixteen year olds have a job and when they catch furs, they become the boss of the money. They think that because they worked for it they should be able to spend it. So when you say we are losing our culture, you are right. That's what causes it. Even though I'm nothing, I'm speaking from the time I got married to how things are in my home now.

When my children go trapping they never cash in the furs. I tell them, one day when you have your own homes you will do whatever you want with your own money, but until then you're working for me. I will buy whatever you need. At that time when you get married you will keep the money you make, but today it is not yours. But we are not doing that today. Whoever makes money, they think the money belongs to them, so they keep the money. They don't think of their parents and they respect nobody. It is because of that we are having our troubles.

It would be good if we also think about this. It is pitiful to hear they don't want to lose our culture, which is the truth. We all think the same, even our children. Even for myself, I don't want anything to happen to my children when I go out on the land. I'm sure you all think the same. We are talking so this does not happen. It is right when we say we don't want to lose the Dene culture. When the Old Chief talked about the school in Edzo, he said he wasn't just talking for the people in Edzo but for all the Dogrib people.

In the south the whiteman makes laws which are not good. They say when the kids reach sixteen, they are the boss of themselves. That is not the way it was with us and so I think we should think carefully about this belief. Whoever wants to talk should do so even if it is not right, since we will choose what is right from the recording. I just wanted to tell you these things since you haven't heard from me.

HARRY SIMPSON: We are sitting here to make a decision for the future of our children. The first school in the five communities was Edzo. From that one, there are now five. The Old Chief made the right decision. He said the white culture is spreading more. He was right. We are talking here for the schools and school boards in our area about what would be good for us in our land. In the past we did it this way.

Both of these people sitting with me have gone to five meetings including this one since we have been re-elected. The motion we made after meeting for the third time, they now are following. We made a motion saying we will not lose the Dene culture. We said we want to live by it; how our people worked hard and how the women tanned their hides, how the priest taught us to pray at that time. This is why some people know how to pray. We are here to work on those two decisions. This is why the teacher who met with us said to make a decision on our Dene culture for our land, since we said we don't want to lose our culture.

We met for two days in Rae Lakes. The elders' way is the Dene culture, so we made a motion that two women will make a hide tent and will teach ten to fourteen year olds. In four days they have already finished the hides to sew the tent. It is now set up in the Rae Lakes school. There are two tents, one like the one we used in the bush made of canvas, and one of the old timer's tipis. They took many pictures of that. The teacher said by doing that we have made a good decision for

our traditions. He said we had made it to show the people that we are using half the English culture and the Dene culture. He said it was a good thing to do.

I was interested so I told him, "Since we are going to teach the children the Dene culture, when the people go hunting anyone who wants to take their sons with them should have a paper to give them permission to go. During the day their fathers can teach them. They can work on something or maybe check the nets. If they are girls, their mothers might go for spruce boughs with them, maybe scrape the hides. That's what they can do during the day. In the evening they can learn from homework that is made up for them. Even that can be counted as going to school." That was the last important thing I talked to the teacher about.

We are now following that policy, and so when Louis Zoe's ten year old son went with his dad for trapping, a permission paper for one month and ten days was made for him. When he is free in the evenings, it will be like he is going to school. Louis Zoe's daughter is fourteen years old and one boy is six years old. They were all given books. It is the same as going to school there. When we mentioned that to the teacher, he liked it. That is the kind of thing we are looking for. It would be good to do the same thing for all the schools in our communities. We can talk about what we did and use that as an example to follow. If we mix in the Dene culture it will be good, because it is the guide we can use to teach each other.

If we really think about what the Old Chief said about our present time, we know he is right. I agree with him when he said the young men are not settled with their parents. One of us here said he talked to one of his sons, but his son didn't listen to him and the father does not like it. He is right in saying that. It is said that we should use half the Dene culture and half the English culture. We would be strong by doing it that way in the school. We spoke that way in my house when we had a meeting for two days. We were told to make a decision for our school, to improve our situation, to make our words strong and to do what we want to do and funding can be made available to us. We are now starting to speak that way for the future. We also said," What will become of the Dene in the future if we lose our language?" We encourage ourselves to keep our language and not to lose it. That is why we are meeting here together. We are not talking about only one thing but also religion. Right now there is one here who teaches religion even though he is a school board member. So I'm grateful to him.

Two small kids said when John's father prays, he prays very loudly. I told them it was good for us to listen to him so that in the future they would know how to pray too. If you are asked to pray at the front of the church you will know how to pray because you have heard it before. I told them religion is the only thing by which we live. That is the kind of work we are now starting to do.

I also asked to build a cabin in the bush and I said I would mention it at this meeting. In June when it is warm we want to teach the children, and also before Christmas we want to teach the boys to set fish nets, to trap, set snares and make snowshoes. We want to build a cabin in the bush to teach the children these skills. We spoke about these things to the teacher, he said we did a good job on everything regarding the project. He said if we keep on working at teaching our culture it will strengthen us. That is what we are discussing amongst ourselves. We may live separately in five different communities but we are here together helping each other make these decisions. We cannot say just help ourselves. We are all helping each other. If we are lucky, maybe our children who will live after us, will understand and use our culture. The young people are poor. If they do not want the culture,

they will be hard to work with. So if we all say we want to keep our culture and make a motion on it, I would be happy. I do not have any children of my own but I raised six children and I love them. I never swear at them. I never shout at them. It is true what my brother Jimmy has said, we love our children. They are important. If we don't teach them before we fall dead, and they don't learn our skills, what would they do? That would be very wrong for them. While we are still healthy and there are some elders still among us, we should quickly teach the children using the words of the elders.

This morning I've been thinking we should start right away with teaching our culture. Tears came to my eyes when I heard my grandfather speak. So I am grateful for this good meeting with no interpretation in English. When we are finished we hope it will be good for us in our own land. Our elders don't want us to turn only to the white ways and that is what we are encouraging each other to do, and because we are in a desperate way, it would be good if we were quickly aided to reach our goal. That's my desire. Thank you.

JIMMY B. RABESCA: We are speaking according to the words of the Old Chief which are true to us. We are correct in the way we plan to work. We know how our parents worked because we saw them at work. They did not work for money, but they worked hard. We are from recent times but we have gone to the barrens with them. Not for money and not in good weather but sometimes in rain, packing over land, packing our boats, packing over rough and difficult portages. We didn't complain that things were heavy. It took just as long to get there as it did to get back. I didn't do it for one cent, but we worked very hard for our meat.

Since this is the work of our elders we cannot throw it away. We are just working in their ways. Today we are talking about their traditions. We are talking about how we can make them strong within our people once again.

In the past we were not cold when we travelled by dogs and we wore snowshoes all day. We worked very late into the night but it seemed like someone else was doing the job. We never complained of being sick. We worked until we were over tired and we got lots of exercise, so we hardly ever got sick. We didn't always eat sweet things; we wanted only cooked foods, soups, meat stock, fish soup. We would drink anything like that. When we made camp we would stick a frozen fish in the snow in front of a fire and we would eat the top part of the raw fish. That was the way we worked.

We are saying we want to work according to our elders' traditions. Now a lot of young men are dying of diseases. Not long ago a young man's skidoo went in the water and that's where he has gone. If he had used dogs he would have heard the noise of the thin ice and gone back. He went under because he couldn't hear the noise thin ice makes with the noise of the skidoo. That is the white culture. If it was the Dene culture that wouldn't happen. It will be good if we discuss the Dene culture until we can fix it the way we want it to be.

When I say it is not cold in the bush, it is because when we worked and travelled all day we would not be cold. Now we can hardly wait to make camp because of the wind, even though we are well and strong. We are like frozen bodies on the skidoo. Today we are obviously sick because our blood freezes. Some of our blood freezes so the sickness overpowers the blood and kills it. When we went trapping for beavers, we would go snowshoeing all the way in melting snow until we came to where we could set our traps. We didn't do that for money. Only

when we trapped a beaver would we have money. That is how our elders worked and sometimes we would work with them. That way of life has disappeared. How long has it been since we have heard anyone has gone trapping for beavers? There are so many animals around because we no longer trap them. It's true when we say it has come to that now.

We are not supposed to get sick but if we do, it's our own fault. We are conveniently waiting for the diseases to attack us. If we work well, our muscles are tight, our blood will also be strong and we will be strong. But today, if we got up from the table here and went out on snowshoes, we would not be able to breathe. This is what it is like now.

We heard that the Old Chief came a long way from the barrens on snowshoes. We heard that is how our elders worked. My father raised us out on an island and everyone in the houses in Lac La Martre knew about us. At this time in the fall he would take us to the island by boat and live there all year. At Christmas we would go back to the people in town and again when it melted, when there was no more ice floating in the lake. In August once again he would take us back there until the next year. That is how he raised us.

Our parents were not the only ones who taught us how to pray. When we went with the people anywhere in the bush or by boat, we would listen to people praying. That is how we learned. God made the thousands of things we see in this world. We think about all of our world when we work in the midst of it. We use these experiences in our speech. God didn't create the world so that only man can teach us.

All the world has laws. There are many thousands of different animals on this earth and they all have their own laws. Look at the different kinds of trees; they all have their own laws. When we walk in the bush we think about all of them. This is how we learn the way of all life and the things we don't know, we get to know. That is why God put things on this world and why we are entreating each other.

That way of life is the elder's culture. When our forefathers lived on this earth, from the time they woke up until the time they went to sleep they worked in the bush. Even though they didn't speak English, when they spoke it was a great education for us. Chief Jimmy Bruneau didn't know how to read and he didn't understand English but he spoke as if he was a wise man. What kind of way was he talking about? He was talking about the strong traditions in which he worked. He said he spoke by the words of his father and his grandfather. He was right. That's what we are talking about.

How can we save ourselves? How can we find the right way? That's what we are discussing with each other. Some young people, even our own children, don't believe us when we talk to them. They are thinking the wrong thoughts. We are not saying that because we are angry at them. We are trying to teach them the right way. We don't want bad things to happen to our children. We want them to die naturally, not by sudden death. We want them to work with their souls towards God. This is what we are saying. We are not just talking about one thing.

I have ten children but if I don't make good decisions for them or if I don't give them good advice, how will they become good people? That's what we are talking about. If I talked to them and they didn't listen to me and then they went to live with other people, those people would ask them if they have parents. They would

be ashamed. When out among the people in a meeting like this, they may be asked to pray. What will they do if they don't know how to pray? That too would be shameful.

That is why I say we are talking about more than one thing. For example the lady that came to Rae Lakes. We heard stories about her and we are grateful to her. That is the right way. She is being a good example for the children. We are not here only to teach the things that are on this earth. We are talking about present things right now, but if we don't prepare them for the future what will happen to them? Maybe people will say they are like the mosquitoes, knowing nothing!

When we talk about how we worked in the bush we are telling the truth because we remember how our fathers worked in the bush. I used to work in the bush with my father when I was small. Around this time I would go for beaver with him on the ice. He would come into the tent covered with dirt from chopping the beaver den. Once when it was getting dark, my father gave me a flannel blanket and told me to go and lie on the ice, around the shores where beavers might be. I remember crying because I was scared. He told me to go out on the ice. When I kept crying he whipped me with a willow and chased me out. He said, " How are you going to live in the future? What skills are you going to use for yourself? If you don't obey, you are going to be poor for the rest of your life. You are not going to see even heaven so why are you looking at me". This he said to me as he chased me out to the lake.

That was how our fathers raised us but today if we did that to our children, they would hit us with their fist and swear at us in English. If we talk to them that way they will think,"My father is angry at me." This is wrong, for that is how our fathers raised us.

For example, my father didn't hit my feet only once but many times. So my mother said to him, "My son is pitiful, he is a male child, why do you hit his toes every morning when you wake him up?" My father said, "You are a woman, don't talk about him. If you complain about how I'm raising my son, and he grows up to be lazy, he will be poor as long as he lives. He will not even see God, so why are you complaining?" That's what my father said to my mother and he was right, because today I'm living after his death.

This is how we want to teach each other. When we talk to the young people that way they think they are being abused. They are not thinking the right way. When we speak to somebody we do it for the right reasons. If a young person complains, he should listen to those who would advise them whether they are his parents or not, and believe them. They may be telling the truth about the bad consequences of what they are doing so they may be convinced to return to a good way of life.

The experiences of the elders are the right way. Chief Jimmy Bruneau may not have spoken in our presence but today it seems as if he visited us. We should really think of what he said. It is right for us to use his words as a guide.

Take the skidoo that went into the water, for example; the boy was not supposed to die but he died. If he had gone by dogs he could have easily turned back and come back alive. Some freeze their legs by skidoo and some crash by skidoo. Last year I saw two girls crash in a skidoo accident. Their legs were broken and in that condition they were taken south. If they had used dog teams around town that

wouldn't have happened. Right now what we are discussing may not be pleasing, but we are discussing what we want to say so that we might think well on it.

In the future when the elders are gone, things may get worse so before that happens we want to teach each other. Right now, for those who may have spoken before but want to speak again, the floor is open. I'm thinking of what the Old Chief said, so I was just telling you of my experience working with my father. Thank you.

LOUIS WHANE: When I think of what the Old Chief said, I never heard him say that the young men and young women should be independent. When you think about it, today the white people have confused the Dene people. They say when the children are old enough they can do whatever they want, even the girls. Today if we discipline our daughters they may tell the welfare people and we would have to pay a fine at our trial for it.

That is the situation now. The white people have changed our culture and did a wrong thing to the Dene. It would have been good if the people did not approve of this. The government may say the girls are old enough but if we don't approve and raise our children in our own way, our children would have still respected their parents. The white people sometimes say at our meetings that the young men and young girls are their own bosses, so now today our children believe they are their own bosses. It would have been good if the Dene didn't say that in the first place. The children would fear their parents a little. We can no longer tell them fearing parents is a good thing. Since welfare supports the young people, we don't want to discipline our daughter. If we discipline them we are going to be fined for it. That is not good.

What Jimmy said is right. There is no other way; what else can we do? When one person speaks, here in a meeting like this, he is speaking for all of us and for all the people. After one person speaks, another will speak again on it. So what can we do with it? How can we work to make it good?

Sometimes I would come in to the school but I was never on the school board. If I had been picked to be on the school board at the beginning when the school in Edzo was opened, I would have told all the stories they didn't know. But only now have I been asked to go with them.

Only by listening to people speak do we find out what is happening. For example, Alexis said if we use angry words to argue with each other at a meeting like this, then we begin to argue about all kinds of different things. So when our children, perhaps two of them live with us, they are free to do what they want. If they work against us and we discipline them, we will be tried for it. So the young girls want the help of the Welfare people. Even our sons are the same. If they don't want to hear good advice, they leave if they want to because they are old enough. It is happening. You can see for yourself that it is happening in Rae. We can't say it is a good thing. So it would be good if we made a decision to use our elders' traditions, our language as well as the English culture.

It is right. Even though I'm not a school board member, I know that the teachers do not help the people in the same way. The schools that are far away, I wonder if they are handled the same?

There is funding available to teach some boys but for some there is no funding. For example here in Rae, the children travel to the barrens to be taught. I loan them

my boat so they can do that kind of work. They do not help all the people the same. There is lots of money for some but for some there is no money. I wonder if there is the same funding for all the schools in our land. I don't think so. When the school first started in our land, when Alexis, Joe Judas and Leon worked there, they taught the boys for one week in the bush because there was funding available. Since then it has never happened again in our land. We should have taught the children to set traps in the bush; even that we don't have. We don't even have religion classes for the children. So to me the schools are not treated equally even though they may be set up the same.

We are saying we want our children to live well. Every man and woman who spoke here also wants it that way. We don't want them to live evil lives but good lives. We want them to be able to work in the Dene way and in the white way. Then it will really go well.

There must have been enough money to build that many schools. There should be funding to teach the girls how to tan hides and sew and also to teach the boys. Then they will learn the Dene culture completely. We are not talking to make things bad but to improve things, so that in the future the Dene children will have a good beginning.

It will not happen that way if we just hold only one meeting. It seems that way to me and that is why I'm speaking out. I have spoken all the things that were on my mind. All the people speaking here should not speak against each other. If one person speaks, another person should speak in agreement.

JOE PE'A: The children are being taught religion in the Snare school. When the children start school, the religion teacher says the Lord's Prayer; then they sit at their desks. We started that last year because we don't want to do without it. As for the small children in the next room, I don't know what they do with them because they are so young. I thought every Thursday the older kids took one hour off, since they are supposed to be in school, to set snares and traps in the bush. That is what I thought they did. But now it may not be that way. Johnny must know about it since he is the religion instructor on Thursdays. Maybe he knows or takes them out himself, I don't know. As for the sewing and all that, since that is part of Dene culture, they are teaching the children that every Thursday too. Those who are good sewers, sew for themselves the clothes they are going to wear. There is one lady teaching them every Thursday. I didn't think they have missed any part of the Dene culture. We are here to hold a discussion with each other so maybe Elizabeth wants to talk since she came to the table. Anyone who wants to talk is free to do so.

ELIZABETH MACKENZIE: I am going to talk about the Old Chief first and after that, about the old timers. Then I would like to relate to you some of the things I remember when I came back from school.

If there are good messages or information written in a book which we can use or live by in this world it is in the Bible. Not one of the stories of God which are written in the Bible is evil. If He makes a law He makes it for the benefit of all, and He also made laws so we would not suffer from anything. He made those kind of laws for us in this world but because we don't know those laws, there's always trouble with us. He made all things for us, many beautiful things so we can think about them and know Him.

When I think of the Old Chief, sometimes I wonder who made his mind to talk about the children way past his death. Who had made him to think that way? I think the Holy Spirit who is the Lord of our minds, made his mind so he was able to speak that way.

Today there are great schools. Some children who were educated in the schools must have been taught well, because some are secretaries and some have important jobs serving their people. That was something good which he spoke about. For the people who live here, he is our great ancestor.

If we worked according to his word we would be like two groups of people. One person would be like two persons. One, knowing everything of the white culture and one, knowing of our ancestors' culture. That person would become very strong for if we know everything like two persons, though we are only one person, there may be no one greater than us. It seems it could be like that, but because we don't believe in ourselves, it is not.

Our ancestor the Old Chief saw far into the future for us. Who told him to see that far for us up to this day? It seems as if he took a trip far ahead into the future and did a great job for us. I wonder sometimes why did he do it? He didn't know how to read nor did he understand English. He had never been inside a school. I wonder what caused him to do that?

A long time ago when the Dene were transported over the lake, three of his children died in Resolution. Two girls and one boy. I guess he remembered that and acted on it. The saying, we love our children is true, so he probably didn't want that to happen again and because of that he spoke of a better life for us. We should always be reminded of what he did. Even the white people remember the days of war in their land. They call it Remembrance Day. It would be good if we did the same thing for the Old Chief.

He saw far into the future for us. It seems as if he knew what was going to happen. He said he couldn't talk long. We should have recorded his words in the past, while he was still healthy. I also regret that.

In the past how did our ancestors live? We heard they worked very hard, which is true. Sometimes my sisters tell me stories about the way my mother used to work, and how she prepared our food for the next trip and the clothes she would make for us. They must have been hard times then. I used to think that if my mother was still alive we would take good care of her because her hands have worked hard for us. That's what I thought when they told me stories of her. So when an elder speaks the young people should listen to them. Elders speak for our good and for the future. They talk according to their experiences of how hard life was. Be careful not to cut yourself, don't steal, these are what our relatives say to us. If you live that way be careful not to get sick and all those kinds of warnings. What they say are not evil things; they give good advice. When an elder speaks young people tend to say, "He speaks too much for nothing. What is he talking for?" If we didn't say that it would be better.

I am only talking about the Old Chief. He said our school should not be telling other people how to live, just how the Dogrib should live. I think in the future the five Dogrib communities should teach their children according to the Old Chief's words. His words should be in writing. Look at the Bible; we love it so, we live according to its words. The Old Chief's words are like that. If we all follow the

Old Chief's words, the children will be strong and competent. We must not only do what we each think or say for our own schools. The schools in the five communities should not each go in their own way.

I came back from school in 1932. It was a long time ago; none of you were probably born then. For five years we never saw the faces of our relatives, none at all. We also didn't hear their voices until five years were completed. I'm not talking about one winter, but five summers and five winters. So I didn't remember my parents at all. I didn't remember how my mother looked...nothing.

When we returned home to Rae and landed ashore near the church, I didn't know who my relatives were. I really didn't know them. I don't want to lie. A woman grabbed me, and then I realized she must be my mother. I still remembered how to speak Dogrib even after five years. She said, "Our tent is over there, follow me." I followed her and saw my sister Adele in the tent. I remembered her because she had been in school with me. Only then did I realize who my parents were, but I didn't recognize my brothers because I didn't remember them. I knew their names but I didn't remember their faces nor how big they were.

Those were hard times for us while we were in school because we never saw our relatives for so long. Many children died there. Some of them died of spitting blood. Some were sick for a long time, maybe it was because of tuberculosis. Some of them fell off the swing. I remembered those events. I remember Madelaine fell off the swing and much blood came out of her mouth. So her father took her home. He came for her during the spring and took her home. She was meant to live so she lived. I also witnessed Philip Huskey's older sister spit a lot of blood and she died from it. Paul Elonzo's two sisters died there and there were many other children. Even though those were terrible times we didn't come back to see our parents for five complete years. The saying, "We are not the boss of ourselves", is very true but I'm lucky I'm still alive.

Sometimes there were hardships and miserable times but we did whatever the nuns told us. We were taught mostly religion and prayers. We were not taught grade five completely. We were just taught to count to one hundred, abc's and reading. We didn't know then what would happen today. There was no one who would go ahead into the future for us. We never heard anyone speak about politics to us at that time. That was how we went to school. So how could we know anything?

When I returned to my parents I read a short easy note to my Dad and he said, "My daughter, how do you know something wiggly like this?" I told him, "It looks wiggly but when you learn it, you know it". During the winter we went to the bush. We went trapping for furs. When the people didn't have enough supplies, they would carry furs for each other to town. I would write down all their orders, even though I didn't know the value of the furs. They themselves knew how much they could buy with the furs. Whatever they ordered would all be shipped to them. So for my father it was as if I brought something new to him which really pleased him. So he said, "It is a good thing. In the future you will send your children to school. I'm not talking about the children of one of you but all of your children".

When our children became school age we really loved them. We didn't want them to sleep alone. But my father said, "Someday there will be many white people. Someday the Dene will live like white people. We heard in the past what will happen. So send all your children to the school."

If you don't know a word of English and some white person met you and told you "I'm going to shoot you!" what would you say since you do not understand? If you happen to say "yes", he will shoot you! It is no good not to understand. Whatever we know, however little, should be taught to our children. That's what my father said to us. When the children were school age my father said that to us. Since then it has guided my actions well.

When I used to speak to the children at school, some didn't like what I was saying. When I met them on the road they would say to me "Education! Education! Education!" That's what they would call me. Those who used to say that are in a miserable situation today. They have no job and they cannot go into the bush. They don't know what to do. I really feel sorry for them.

So if the children were taught in both cultures equally, they would be strong like two people. We are the Dene, it is a shame to have to teach our children our language but we have to . That's what I think. What the Old Chief talked about is for some good time in the future. Today he didn't talk about everything but it is good for us to reflect upon what he did say. He spoke as if even though we are only one person, we can be two persons. He looked far ahead for us, and we gain from it.

We are all Dogrib in the five communities, so we should not speak against each other. Everyone speaks two languages, English and Dogrib. If we wrote down what the Old Chief wanted for the school in the future, it would make us a strong people.

I still didn't finish telling my story. When I came back from the residential school, there were no books. I left before they gave me some books, so I used to collect pieces of paper on the road, even old, faded newspaper. So that I could keep reading, I used to collect scraps of paper where the white people camped. Even though I didn't fully understand what I was reading, I kept on reading, on and on to this day.

In the winter of 1933 our family met Madelaine Rabesca's grandfather in the bush. When we met them, there were a lot of people in his house. At that time we had just come back from school and we were immature and knew nothing. We felt like strangers, because we behaved and spoke differently. That's how we were when we returned home. So my mother said to the old man, "She was in a residential school, now she is like a crazy person." Then grandfather said to me, "Do you know how to read?" I said, "a little bit". "I see", he said, "If you know how to read, don't give it up. Many people go to school but they don't remember how to read because they don't keep reading. Don't let that happen to you." He said to me, "If you collect scraps of papers and keep reading them you will be ahead. Someday you will know more about it," he said. So that's what I have been doing. Today I have benefited from the many scraps of paper I have collected and read.

But no one can collect scraps of paper when there is so much work to do. We are not free to do what we want when we live with our parents. So if we keep our parents' words, even though they are harsh, we become better for it; but if we don't want to do as they say, we cannot be anything.

Now we want our children to be taught other than in English. That is a good thing. We are born Dene, so we have to live in the Dene way. Our mothers and fathers spoke in the Dene language. We have to keep their language. Our language is what

makes us a people, so we should not be ashamed of it. We should keep our language strong in the school, so it is right to teach our children our language. They will learn good advice, they will listen well to the elders' stories, and they will always remember the Old Chief. Since they are Dene it is right to say we want them to live in the Dene way. Tomorrow we will be speaking again, so that is all I will say.

LUCY LAFFERTY: I'm the chairperson of the Rae-Edzo School Society of which Marcel Zoe and Elizabeth MacKenzie are also members. We are here listening to you discussing these things regarding the Dene culture. You are talking about the Dogrib language being taught to our children, and also religion being taught so the children will be able to pray, and bush skills being taught so the children will have a good life in the future. You mentioned many other things but these three you have stressed the most in the discussions. The culture you have discussed is already the way you want it. If we put it in writing and make a decision about it we will meet again to discuss how it will be carried out. When the Old Chief spoke, he wanted the children to learn both cultures, the Dene culture and also the English culture. I have worked for many years in the school. I wonder how much of the curriculum you who are school board members know about? Sometimes when the children return home with homework you may wonder what it is for. It is the concept which the teacher is teaching the children. I wonder if you know that? Some teachers visit all your homes during the school year. They tell you how your child is doing in school but perhaps you have not really understood what they were talking about.

All the teachers in the N.W.T. are teaching the children the same subjects as in the southern schools. When the children enter school they are taught language; the way people speak to each other. They are also taught Social Studies; the way people live with each other in far away places, their culture and how they live, what kind of country they live in. Children from grade one to grade twelve learn about what grows on earth, weather, wind, where the rivers flow and also how to be healthy. Why should we brush our teeth, and why do they get a needle at the clinic? They are taught all that so they can look after themselves. They are also taught to sing and dance and are also taught religion for one hour a week. Nobody can learn everything quickly in one hour. You are right that you want your children to be taught religion. If you made that decision, you are not saying the children will be taking only one hour of religion but all day. If you have the decision written down then the teachers will work according to it.

The children are taught everything I have mentioned everyday. When the small children first enter school from Bay Island, Edzo and Rae, they don't know each other. When they first enter school they are all taught each other's names. Since they are going to be taught together we teach them to work together really well. You yourselves know that when it is time to leave the place where you were fishing, you clean up the place when you leave. You leave the place the way it was. When the little children enter the classrooms, we teach them to put back whatever they were playing with in the right places. If there's garbage on the floor we ask them to put it in the garbage can.

Since they are young we don't use big words to talk to them. If we do they cannot see it in their minds since they are not able to think well yet. So when we work with them, they have to feel things with their hands, taste things with their mouths and see things with their eyes; only then do they understand what we are trying to teach them.

The children do not need to stay in the school all the time; they can do some of their work in the bush. If you tell the teachers how you want your children taught, they will do it. If you see all the teachers, most of them are white people. They do not see things in the same way the Dene see things. For example when you see a caribou, the white people see how a caribou looks, it's antlers and so on. That's all they see. But when we see a caribou, we see whether it is fat, whether it will be good for moccasins and dry meat. That is what we see.

There are two ways of looking at things. No whitemen understand the traditional way of life. Elizabeth MacKenzie, Alphonse Eronchi and myself sometimes meet with the people in Yellowknife, Fort Simpson and Fort Franklin. We discuss the need to have the white people who are teaching our children, taught our culture, the way we see things. That is why we are working on a new curriculum. For example we write down everything about a woodland caribou, where it lives, where to look for them. All this we discuss.

Those of us who attended school were taught by the white people. We were never taught our culture. Even the books that were handed to us had white children in them. We never saw Dene children like ourselves to the time we finished school. When they talked about the earth, they told us stories about places like China, but never about our own people. They talked about land but never about what our own land was like. They talked about far away countries where they grow things and about big mountains where people live. This is what they taught us the most. We know some of those cultures but we don't know our own culture. That is why you say you want to teach mostly Dene culture in the schools.

That is a lot of work you are making for yourselves. All the books that are in the school you will have to throw away. Then if you write down everything of the Dene culture such as how to work in the bush, how to set rabbit snares, if you write down everything about your culture and hand it to the teachers, then they will teach the children our traditional ways.

When Chief Bruneau spoke, he spoke about the two cultures. I wondered why he said the things he did. When we are teaching the children, they are in class for only five hours. If we teach the two cultures there will be too many subjects to teach. Some subjects may not be completed. So we should teach our culture more using the English language, not the English culture but their language. We all want our children to read and write.

A long time ago a lady worked here. She went around town and recorded stories told to her by the people of the ways Dogrib people used to live. Then she tried to make a book. So she collected some stories from the past when people used to cook food in birch bark baskets, how they put in hot stones and all the kinds of things they made, birch bark canoes and what they were sewn with, how they figured things out and all that. She collected and wrote in English. It is our culture but she wrote it all down in the English language. In that way the children learned to write and read the English language and in writing and reading they learned many things about Dene culture.

If you go in the classroom now they would be reading but the stories they are reading are not our stories. They are stories written by the white people about far away places. So it is not our fault if you say the white culture is stronger. We didn't know anything about how children go to school because that was not how

we were raised. The white people have been in our land for many years and we think we should let them teach our children, so we just give them our children. We want our children to know English, and the English culture is strong but we also want our children to know the Dene culture. Few of the books are written about the Dene culture. Every day the children read about the white way of life, of white mothers and white fathers. We are raised with many members of our family. You have grandchildren who call you big mother and big father but not grandmother and grandfather. When our hair turns white then they will call you grandmother and grandfather. The white people do not do the same thing. There is only a father, a mother and their children; that is their family. They do not include their grandparents or uncles. When they grow up, they leave their parents and live on their own. But we are not that way as we live among all our relatives. We help them and they in turn help us. Many young people today want to help their people but they find it difficult because they live in a whiteman's way. If you want to teach our children the Dene culture, then you would have to throw away all the other books.

Since there are not enough native teachers you can tell the teachers if they want to teach here, to live among us and learn the Dogrib culture for one year. If you want that to happen you just have to vote it in. Bring different teachers here, and when you come to the schools you can help the teachers yourselves. We were sent to schools far away and that is why we don't know our culture completely. When we work as teachers even though we speak Dogrib, the children learn the English culture because everything is written in English. If you want the children to learn the Dogrib culture you will have to tell them to do away with some of the books. You who are on the school board should go and see what books are in the schools. Even the television the children are watching is not about the Dene culture. They watch people fighting with each other using kung-fu. We never saw our grandfathers or fathers doing that, but the children are mostly being taught by that kind of television show. If you want the children to learn our culture you will have to tell them to make a television show of women who are able to work well on hides. Since you have the authority, you can talk to whoever works in Education about it. Tell them you want to teach our culture and put it on video for teaching in the schools.

Some parents and grandparents were never raised in the bush so their children do not like to go to the bush. If there are videos available to them, they can teach themselves. Even we want you to re-teach us our culture. There are a lot of Dogrib people in Yellowknife and Edmonton writing to us, saying, "I am a Dogrib person. Send me materials so I can learn my language." But there are no schools like that for us. Even some of us who do not know enough Dogrib want to learn more, but we don't know how to begin.

You have a strong voice, so it would be good if you ask the government for one building in which we would work only on our language. We would teach our children everything we name in Dogrib. Some of us are like elders now. Our children do not know how to name some things in Dogrib. If you don't teach us, our children will lose their language. So if you don't ask for a building for our language then nothing will happen.

If our culture is written down it will be readily available for many years in the future. But if our language and culture is not written down, then it will all be lost. Sometimes I am very concerned about our language. I used to teach the children to write our language. I used to teach the older kids how to write Dogrib every day

for one hour. Sometimes I taught the teacher assistants and I also taught the grade eight and nine students because they wouldn't be in their community during the next year, and because they wanted to know how to write their own language. However, it seems we are losing our language. The grade eight and nine students are beginning to name things differently. We understand what they are saying but their words are all mixed up. If we don't help them right away then our language will be destroyed.

Other people who have a strong language have their own country. The Chinese people who live here can send their children to learn their language in their own country. But because our language is not written, we cannot pick up a book and easily teach it. Many people agree with what you are saying about our culture. We don't know how to work it out and whether funding will be available for it. We don't know those things. If you find out about those two things it would be helpful. The kids go to school everyday. What are the teachers teaching the kids? It would be good if you find out. When you find out you can make good decisions that can be written down for the teachers.

Sometimes when the parents come to the school and see the children cutting with scissors, they say they can do that with their children at home. They do not know the real reason why their children are cutting with scissors. Small children do not have strong hands. We want to make their hands and fingers strong to write well with a pencil, so every day we make them move their hands. They have to do something with their hands everyday and only then do they learn to write. You want them to do beading, wood cutting and making camp fires. Some of the kids do not do that everyday so they don't seem to understand it. They see it only once and forget how to do it again. If we work with them every day then they will learn it.

I also thought about what Harry Simpson said about building a cabin in the bush and teaching the children our culture. The grade eight and nine students are taught none of the Dene culture. If we build a school cabin in the bush for all the senior students which I think are less than a hundred, and taught them there for one year without a television, just the books for reading and working on all skills, Dene and English, then maybe they will appreciate the way their fathers and mothers have lived. If they don't have that experience, they will never know it. Think about all that and you will have a strong voice because you are talking for your culture. If you make a mission statement and say how you want it, it will happen. That is what I wanted to tell you.

ALPHONSE QUITTE: Since we are telling each other stories, I will tell a story of the people of the past. When the old timers lived on this earth they were very poor. I myself know that. At that time there was no family allowance, no welfare, and no old age pension; there was money only from trapping. It was a terribly harsh time. At this time in the fall, before the land freezes, they would begin trapping. They would set their traps along the shores for mink. They didn't care if the skin of the animal was dark because the clerk didn't complain about it.

At that time they led a very harsh life and when winter came they would walk to their trap lines carrying only their packsack. There were no iron traps, only the wooden traps. When they camped for the night they made bait sticks with meat at the ends. Then they would sharpen a bait stick and put a piece of meat at the end and hang it to freeze during the night. After it was frozen, they put it in their pack sack and left for their trap line. In one day they would set about a hundred traps,

fifty traps until lunch and another fifty until they camped for the night. They worked in very harsh conditions.

I remember at that time my grandfather, Tseye's father was still alive. At that time none of you were born. At that time, the lakes froze at Sequint Lake past Rae Lakes. I must have been this small when it froze over with us there. My father trapped around there until Christmas when the people started the trip back to town. My grandfather said to go to town because we cannot live here. So we went to town on foot because there were not enough dogs; some only had two or three dogs then.

At that time, Widalia, you may have known her, lived with us. She went to town for her father with only two dogs. With only a few belongings at the front of the sled, she knelt at the back, and pushed along with sticks on both sides of the sled. That was how the dogs were pulling them along when I saw her. It was a harsh time.

While we were camped there after Christmas grandfather said, "We can't live here for the whole year, so we will go to the barrens and look for caribou. If there are enough caribou, we will try to live there." There were few dogs, maybe one or two. There were four people in my grandfather's family, three sons plus my grandfather. There were only three dogs but they were told to hunt caribou, so they went to the barrens. Some of them had small homemade sleds which they pulled along with them. Some of them walked with packs on their backs. It is far over the lake and the same distance again on the land. In that way they camped seven times. That is what my grandmother told me.

At nightfall we heard gun shots out on the lake. What was happening? Maybe the hunters were coming back? Maybe they had shot something? There were no caribou around where we were as they were far past our land, along the treeline. They went there on foot for caribou. That is how far they came with a pack of meat on their backs. Some pulled a small sled loaded with meat. So it is really true when we say the Dene lived a very harsh life on this earth. After they arrived back grandfather said we are going to the treeline to shoot caribou since we cannot live here all year.

We didn't have shells in those days, we only had what we called round shot. Some only used reusable bullets. That's how we left for the caribou and slept many nights during our trip. We finally arrived at a place where they had made a high rack for the caribou meat. When we got there we pitched our tent, and then my grandmother and the other women took down the hide and thawed it out. They shaved it, scraped it and twisted it to make babiche. With that my grandfather made snares for caribou. That is how the Dene lived on earth during the time when times were hard. There was nothing that came from the whiteman.

At that time old men and women were healthy, because the blood of the animals strengthened their blood. They were a strong people then, but today the whiteman's food we eat is not made for us. It has now become part of our blood, so how can we become strong against disease?

We were told that when the old timers lived on this earth some of them couldn't eat because they couldn't swallow their food. That's the only way they would finally die out there. They said that was how they lived on earth. I remember that. I don't remember what happened to us after that.

When spring came they were making canoes. I was just a child when they were making a birch bark canoe. They were singing and shaving the canoe frame when the sun was rising. That's what my grandmother told me. There is no such way of life now. When it froze they would make a sled from birch trees. They would chop out a birch and make a sled. There were not stick supports to hold up the sled bag so they had to shave them with a wooden planer. Elizabeth's uncle, Pierre's father, Ekarisi carved a sled for us. He would hold a planer like this and would show us how to work using our two arms together. "We carve a sled by helping each other," he would say. Some people would give him some snuff. They would say, "when we give you snuff you must have a song." They would say, "So why are you carving without saying anything?" or," Why are you not singing while you are carving?" Then he would sing "Kwele K'egha Kwele K'egha". I remember him singing that song. There was a flat tobacco plug about this big with a half moon on it, which they also used to give to him. He would make up a song for it and he used to sing "Ts'e kweka k'egha" while he was carving. I remember him singing those songs. That is how people used to live in this world.

My father worked a lot with me. After my mother died, he remarried Wana's sister and lived one year with her before she died. We used to live at Hottah Lake and there were just the two of us. There was no one to sew for me, so my clothes were not good. Things were poor for a lot of people at that time. I had to wear torn moccasins, so he sewed them and I also sewed my own moccasins. Later on in my life, I hated sewing moccasins. I told him,"You always want to go somewhere but I have to sew my moccasins." I told him, "I'm not going to sew them if they tear again". "Why are you complaining?" he said. I told him, "I'm tired of sewing my old moccasins. Let's go and live with other people. Why are you always going off alone with me?" "Don't complain, we won't be here long, we will return to the people shortly after we have set all our traps." He had killed a small moose so he said, " I will try scraping the moose hide." I wondered how he was going to do it. He thawed the hide completely. Then he tied three sticks together and stood them apart. He made a flesher out of a caribou leg bone with a string handle. Then in maybe two days he scraped the flesh off. Then he shaved the hair off. I wondered what he was going to do with it next. He cut four poles outside and set them up and stretched out the hide on it. Who showed him what to do? I was really amazed at him. He took the handle off one of our two axes, tied a stick through the axe head and using it as a scraper, scraped the hide with it. He put the framed hide against the sun and looked through it. The thick part could easily be seen and he kept on scraping it until he was done. There was no bucket, so I wondered what he was going to use. So finally he sharpened a spear which we brought along and took off the handle and went into the bush with it. I heard him chopping something there while I was collecting firewood. I was done with the firewood and he was still gone for a long time. He had told me to make tea for him and cook something, so I made tea and boiled some fish. He was gone for a long time, so I went after him. He had chopped down a large tree and chopped it this long. He chopped a hole in it this big around, with the spear head, until a hide could be put in it. That was what he was doing when I met him. He said, "It's finished, take the axe and I'll take the wood", so he took the wooden tub home.

He untied the hide and took the hide off the poles. Then he brought the hide in to thaw it. He poured hot water into the wooden tub and put in the hide. There was no caribou brain so what could he do? He had "Losch" liver and other fish livers as well. These he told me to chew up so I kept chewing it and he told me to put it in the water. There was no soap around but there was some rabbit liver, so I put that

in too. There was a moose backbone from when we killed the moose and he took out the spinal cord and put that in too, stirred it all together, and the hide became whitish. That was how I observed my father tan a hide.

After he smoked the hide I wondered what he was going to do with it. The moccasins I was wearing, he said to take them apart. I took them apart and placed them on the hide. Then he took a knife and cut around them. He copied the upper just like the way it was. Then he started to sew the moccasins for both of us. He made moccasins for me and him. I also took apart mitts like this and he made mitts from the old patterns. That was how we left for Christmas.

When we arrived in town for Christmas we lived with Pierre Mantla's father. When we walked in he said we must have met some people, because we were wearing new mitts and new moccasins. There hadn't been anybody to meet at that time. What could I say? I didn't say anything. He asked us again if we had seen some people because of our new moccasins and mitts. My father said, "Where could we see people; we didn't see anyone. Why shouldn't we come with new moccasins. We all have hands," was my father's reply to him. Whatever I saw my father do, today I can do. If I make a snowshoe, I can make the netting.

That was how I worked with my father. But today nobody would do that. That is why Elizabeth's parents used to really like me.When my clothes were no good and my old moccasins torn I would come to them. If they asked me to chop wood for them I would chop wood. Her mother said, "This young man listens when we talk to him, so I'm going to give him a pair of moccasins. She said this in my presence and gave me a pair of moccasins. Her father said to me, "Go and get your blankets so you can live with us." At that time this one (Elizabeth Mackenzie) was in a residential school. She may have heard her father say that so she left and hid from me! Today I would have been living with her!

When we say the old timers lived a hard life, it is true. We forget how the people worked so hard in those days. What I wanted to tell you is just what I was telling you about.

JOE PE'A: That was a good story. What Jonas' wife said about our children learning the cultures of other people because they are written down, instead of our own culture is not the way it is supposed to be. Since they are our children it should be written so that they will learn our culture. This is not right so we will discuss it to help make it right. To teach our culture is what we all want.

HARRY SIMPSON: You are all right to say that our culture is our elders' way, the Dene way. I'm not going to talk long but I want to tell you about a meeting which we had and what my niece said. She said, "When a woman or mother teaches us, it is skills they are teaching." It is that way. Back in Rae Lakes, two women finished tanning eleven hides in four days. Three were scraped already and some were raw hides. They tanned them in only four days. They are like cloth but not yet smoked. They are making a tent out of scraped hides. Even that is a big job. The older students in school can learn that and it will become important to them. I just wanted to mention that.

JOHN B. ZOE: We are just talking to each other until Bill comes. When he comes we will end our meeting. He said he will come around 4:00 p.m. Before the white people came among us the Dene used to teach each other the Dene traditions. A long time ago when the priest came, the great disease spread among us and many

people died at that time. So the priest gathered the orphans, the young people and small children whose parents had died. I suppose it was because they had a strong religious conviction and did not want to leave the children in their suffering. For that reason they started a place to care for these orphans.They looked after them and taught them to set fish nets to feed themselves, cut wood to heat their buildings and taught them their religion. The children lived there until they became independent. That was how education started. It started about the same time as the treaty, about sixty-seven years ago, and the government included the education of the children in the agreement.

Around that time money for the childrens' education became available. Before that the priests and nuns who were looking after the children did it for nothing because their parents had died. But after the priests and nuns found out that there was money involved, with the government's help, they brought in children from the bush. There were no schools in the bush so where could the teachers teach them? There was no building for them but when the priests and nuns became aware of the money, they built bigger schools to house the children. When the money came into the priests' hands, then everyone, even children who had parents, went to school. Before that time there was only the Dene culture, but after the nuns and priests became aware of the money, they started the white education.

Later, about thirty years ago, the federal government took over the schools. Schools were built all over to teach the children the whiteman's way without the Dene culture, and they started to tell the children not to speak in their own language. Twenty-three years ago, around 1967, the territorial government in Yellowknife took over education, but they still wanted the children to be taught in the whiteman's way.

Now today, things have changed again and you in the five communities have taken control of your children's education. Since you now have control, the government says to work on education in whatever way will be good for us. That is what we are doing now. A long time ago our forefathers lived in the Dene traditions and had their own language. Government education of our people started when treaty money was taken. Then the territorial government in Yellowknife took over education. Now it has been placed in our hands again.

All that time the Dene culture was never taught. It must be going on a hundred years. However, the Dene still have their language, but lately our way of life is faster. We travel faster, we talk to each other by telephone and radio even though we don't see each other. When a way of life is faster, we begin to lose our culture faster because of it. Since education is now in your hands, the government is telling you to think about it and to do whatever you think will make it strong.

ELIZABETH MACKENZIE: That was mission school. I have been told when the mission school started, the government paid two dollars for one child. That was how much money they got for teaching the children. After that I guess the government took over the schools.

JOHN B. ZOE: Yes. The government took that money back and it was in their hands. When they took over education they said there will be no more "Dene", we will all be the same as the white people and have the same way of life as the other people in Canada. We are not to say, he is a Dene but we are all to be the same as other people. This is why when they were teaching the young people, they didn't teach our culture.

After the territorial elections, things changed. The people who won the elections were our own people. Our own people now speak for us and because our own people speak for us our children's education is now in our own hands. Now what will we do with it? Once we have worked on a new education using our culture and language as a guide, maybe the Dene will be a strong people. Education is not a new thing to us. It has been happening for a long time but only in the beginning were we in control of it. Now we are again in control of it, so we are here to pick and choose from a lot of information that is available to make something good.

ELIZABETH MACKENZIE: So we are to think of ways to work out a good plan. I think the situation today, of which we are in control, is good. However I still think that if the children learn English fully, they can use it to learn their culture better. It would be good that way. If they were well-educated, they would be able to help themselves. That is what I think.

OE PE'A: Think about it again for tomorrow. Right now you may be visiting each other. Since there are a lot of elders in town, take some time to discuss these matters so there will be more ideas. Tomorrow will be the last day, so if you want to quit for today, we can pray and leave. While we are waiting for Bill, we are just having a discussion with each other. Once we have all the talk written down, we will have many good ideas. Do you want to stop for today?

ALL: Not yet.

ALPHONSE QUITTE: John, since you said it is now in our control, maybe we should not be in a rush. We don't know if we can do a good job by meeting together only once. It may be better if we work on it after meeting two or three more times.

JOHN B. ZOE: It has been discussed since last year. The Divisional Board of Education for the five communities has discussed it several times. Last year when the people went to Roundrock Lake, they discussed it for five to ten days. Everything they have discussed there is also all written down. We are looking at it for the last time here because a lot of people have already discussed it. We are discussing it for the last time in case we left anything out. Once it is written, all the teachers and school board members will use it. After all the ideas are written down, the Divisional Board of Education will meet again to review it. A motion will be made. We are not going to make a motion for it tomorrow but try to think of more ideas. So right now we are looking at it for the last time.

Thursday November 15th, 1990.

JOE MANTLA: If we set one direction to follow and if we followed that direction, how will it be in the future? Will it be the right way? Will we be able to work on it in a good manner? I don't think it is right to follow the government's way of doing things. For example, now as it is, if we discipline our child, we will have to go to court for it, The laws are like that. As well, if we supposedly slapped a woman, we would go to court for that, too. We did not make those laws; the government made those laws and that too doesn't seem right.

The board members talk about the way they used to work in the bush. They talk about all these things and they are speaking true. We who have worked in the bush,

and have used dog teams in the past, have done good work. Sometimes we had heavy sled loads, so we had to run after our dogs and the going was hard. There were no trails ahead, so we had to break trails in front of our dog teams. I remember it was very cold, even to take our hands out of our mitts. Sometimes it was fifty below, sometimes forty below and you could see the ice fog. But that was the way we worked. It was cold. Sometimes we wanted to hurry up but since we were using snow shoes to break trails for our dog teams we would have to stop and make a fire because we were cold and our hands were freezing. We would chop wood and put it lengthwise into the fire, like that. We wanted to hurry up so we did that while still wearing our snow shoes. We also cut spruce boughs too, sometimes we cleared the snow away. If we had to spend the night, it was like that. If we had to sleep without tents, it was that way too. Since we used our dogs as our motor vehicle, we kept them well. We cooked caribou meat for them too, cooking just the outside of the meat to throw them. Because of that, the dogs were good, the dogs were strong.

Today, as it is now, there's just the whiteman's way of doing things. That's the way it is. Now that people are using skidoos, we have not seen anyone or any young man using snowshoes. If they want to make a camp fire, we see them using skidoo boots, trampling through the snow. When they make a fire, they chop down only one wood and they just cut that in half. They do that even if they're going to spend the night out there. They do that when they're making a camp fire and it's like camping out using firewood cut for a wood stove. Maybe they are doing that because they do not know how to work in the bush. Now as it is, we don't have to endure hardship when we work in the bush. We don't suffer for anything. When we want to work on the land, whether or not it is far away, whether there's a trail or not, we use skidoos and we use airplanes. That's the way we work and that's how it is now.

I am grateful to the elderly woman I'm staying with at Bay Island, for she too, has mentioned this. Since I have come to Rae-Edzo, she has said this and I have heard her. She said," Your sister, I talk to her but she doesn't listen to my words.There are all these children living here and they are all her children. I taught her well before she got married. But now, the parents don't get up until the afternoon. The children go back to school while they are still asleep. Who is going to feed them? The dishes are not done and dirty, there are bones scattered in there and it stays like that. Who is going to fix that up for them, while they're sleeping? I have talked to them more than once. In the past, my elders have lived on the land and talked to me; that's the story I have talked to them about, but not one of them took my words. And my relatives don't obey me either." That's what she related to me and that's why I am saying this. Masi. We are telling each other good stories and there is still time, but that is all I want to say for now.

JOE PE'A: As for the children we are discussing, I mentioned it once at a Rae Lakes meeting and also at Lac La Martre too. They say that the government has control over them. And that is what I talked about. What if they are playing outside and we tell them to go back to school, we as parents tell them that but what if they say, " No, I am going to play, I'm not going to school?" What are we going to do about it? We can't spank them. Who wants to go to court? Who wants to go to court for spanking their children? That is the government way of doing things. If the little child says they don't want to attend school, what can we, as their mothers and fathers, do about it? If we were to chase them back to school or discipline them, the government would take us to court. And that is not good. That way of doing things is not the same as it used to be long ago.

Even our wives too, if we were to beat up our wives, they will go to the police. The police will tell her, walk away from him and Welfare can look after you. If they are going to tell her that, she probably will. And that is the government way, too.

So because of the government even our children don't obey us anymore. We talk to them and when we talk to them about the right way, they walk out. If they move in to another's house, what can we do? We can not discipline them at all, so because of the government, things have turned terrible, and it is like that. They have agreed with me and asked me to talk on the radio. Jonas said that because a lot of people would be listening, but I did not mention it once on the radio.

So because of the government, our children do not obey us. Even you, who are all sitting in here, some of you, your children probably don't obey you. Our children realize that if we spank them, we could go to court and that's why they don't obey us. That is the way the government has their laws and it is terrible.

JOHN B. ZOE: Yesterday before we left, we discussed the way things used to be with our people. The priests started to look after the orphan children and then after the treaty money came, they started to educate all the children. After that, the government took the money back from the church schools, and started to teach our children themselves. Now elected people have control of education and since our own people are there also, things have changed for us. Education is in our control and we are working on ways that we can teach our children.

In this meeting there are many elders and young people mixed together. We can discuss those things of importance to us and then we can understand one another. However, on the school boards people replace one another, and the decisions or ways you have made, will be hard for others to see. If we don't remember why we are here, then we will easily end up with the whitemans' culture again. So to avoid things from happening like that in the future, we have to plan ahead of time. When old Chief Bruneau talked in front of the seven board members and said, "I was the one who asked for the school, that's why it is there", maybe he also wanted to include what direction education was to take . Sometimes it is forgotten because now people win through elections and we are not all the same. Some of them don't know about those ways. They don't recall what was said by people who were there before them and then they change everything. So to avoid that we must remember those things. I'm saying this to you because we didn't say too much about it yesterday. So now, whoever wants to talk and say a few words can do so because it is an open meeting. Talk if you want to talk and masi cho!

MR. HARRY SIMPSON: Yes, whatever we have discussed yesterday, we remember. If we think about it, it's like that because you, John B. Zoe, have explained it to us. So it is like that. In the past, the other people had control over our ways of education and although we talked about it, we didn't know what to do. Nobody thinks the same as another but when I think about it, it seems as if we will be taking back our elders' way of doing things. It seems as if we will be heading that way and because of that, I feel happy about it.

Right now, when we look around at our people wherever they are living, we will notice they have lots of children. In the future how will they cope? If the children are going to live the whiteman's way in this land, that doesn't seem correct at all. I think we should all support each other and make a motion to support our cultural

ways and also make a motion so that decision will remain as it is for those who will replace us in the future. That would be good.

As of now, it's up to all of us who are on the Divisional Board of Education. We are on an important board now. Back in 1989, the Territorial Government had all the authority. They made all these decisions for us in Yellowknife. Although we held discussions and sometimes we spoke with nice words, still nothing happened. I have worked many times with people and I know those ways. And now, what you have written on the charts, is good indeed. So we have met for two days and have shared good words. When we get back to our homes we can talk to everybody about it and say that if it is like this in the future, it will be good.They left it up to the people to take control. So it's up to us and we have to do it ourselves.

If children are to go to school, it's important that we send them to school. Yesterday, I mentioned what we did in Rae Lakes. If a father wants his son to go with him for one week, we ask the teacher a couple of days in advance. Then he can take all his books and papers along, and it is like he is in school and counts as though he is attending school. For that we made a motion and it is good.

We have to consider all these different ways. The government is not going to come and tell us what to do. We who are the elders now, have worked well with our relatives. We know the land, but if our culture is not there for the babies now growing up, and if there are just the whitemans' ways left for them, they will be poor. I am thinking like this because my mind was strong concerning it. It is really important to pray for this. Prayers may not be visible but they are indeed useful. Whatever is on the land wears out. If there is a trail over the rocks, the rocks wear down. Even the trees wear down easily but God's words never wear out.

I am mentioning a lot of things concerning school situations in our region. We cannot neglect our language and culture and we have to try to take it back. That is what the teacher has mentioned to me and that is what I have been thinking about a lot. So that is why I have come to sit with you. We will still be meeting for quite awhile yet but for now, I'm grateful to you and that is what I wanted to say to you.

JOSEPH PE'A: Concerning the school board elections you mentioned, I have been thinking about that too. Why, when there's an election for the school board, is it in the government's hands? They only confuse us. It never used to be like that in the past. In the past, when we were elected school board members, we stayed on the board for a number of years and nothing moved or changed with us at all. Since they have made up regional school boards, it seems as if there are always elections. Why does it seem as if they will be confusing us? We weren't the ones who said anything about it, when it occurred. On whose words did they do it and work like that? We don't mean to say we will be on the board all the time, but if there's an election again, and if one who doesn't know anything about our way of doing things won, what will they do? Maybe the people will go back to the whitemans' ways.

I just wanted to tell you about it, that's why I mentioned it. So whoever wants to talk, it's an open meeting, and I just wanted to say a few words about what I am thinking. Masi!

JOHN B. ZOE: The two who have talked covered many topics. It is the same idea to teach the children our Dene culture whether they are in the bush or in the classroom. We say these things to the teachers in the schools. If they see it written

on paper that's when they will begin working on it. As for the election of board members, the government is thinking of better ways to do it. As of now, if the government has funding available for people, they don't just throw it at them. Money is sent to people or organizations which have names or titles. That is because it is not their money and because it is an organization, it is hoped they will not make mistakes. That is the way the government works. But aside from that, whenever they work on the land, even the M.L.A.'s usually have one or two elders with them. So in that way, they'll have the example of strong minds.

So anyway, we are sitting here and having this discussion. About twenty-five years back when the old community hall was first built, there were no town councillors. Also at the time there were no elected NWT government members. There were just people living in Rae, the Old Chief and his councillors. At that time federal government people came and told us we would be celebrating Canada's birthday in two years and that we should do something to show how happy we were. They wanted to throw us some money but there was nobody here with a name or a title. To us, they had names and titles. They were our chief and councillors, but as far as the government was concerned they had no organizational status and so the government had nothing to do with them. Some white people and some young people got together and gave themselves a name on paper. They called themselves the "Community Hall Club" and that was when they received the funding. After they received the money they built the old community hall. They bought supplies, people helped each other and that's how the community hall was built. So where we say things are getting confused with us, we should think about that example. Back then, the people probably thought the community hall belonged to them because it was there before town councillors, and it was there before the elected government members. But even then, the ones who had a name or title had control over it and whatever money was made, it went to them. After that, town council was created and they all had names and titles.

ELIZABETH MACKENZIE: Was that with Peter Anderson?

JOHN B. ZOE: Yes. So anyway, they had an organizational name and title and the ones who had control of the community hall were mostly white people because our people did not know much about these matters. They kept replacing one another because some of them worked for the stores and they would leave. Later on, they gave everything to the town council and gave them control. This included the community hall, the land with it and whatever amount of money was there; it was all given to the town council. Back then it was an old community hall but when the people were using it, they had really good meetings. When a feast was held in there people ate really well and if there was a drum-dance, they had good dances. We thought it belonged to us, and that's why the building was used so well.

Through elections, people replaced each other on town council. So they forgot who it used to belong to and then the council thought it belonged to them. It was ours, but because there were a lot of young people in that organization and it was too small for recreation like ball games, hockey and skating, they got rid of that building and asked for the Sportsplex.

Today the Sportplex is too far for the people to go to easily, and a time has to be called or set just to have a dance or to hold a feast. When we want to have a hand game, we don't know where to go. So it's as if we have nothing else to do but watch T.V. So if we think about it, although that community hall may have been

old, it used to belong to our people. The lesson from that story is that if we replace something with something new we should make sure that what is good from the old is added to the new. It's that way.

We don't mean to say we will forget or throw away things from the past but we will put them together! If we put the white man's ways and our traditional ways together then this makes education all the stronger. For example, if we look at that Sportsplex building, it was built mostly the whitemans' way . Our traditional way is not reflected in there and because of that the elders and the young people are separated. For the children, the building may be good but for the elders it is not good. It is like that now so how could they come together and go to each other?

So now, if we are going to make something, we are saying let us put the two ways together. And as for that, if we have an organizational name or title, things aren't that hard where the government is concerned. They throw us the money! So now, you have an organizational name and although people may replace each other and sometimes change a few things, the elders have strong minds, and even if they are not elected, they should still be there to watch over us.

In all the schools, there are usually one or two older representatives. That is the way things have been happening now, with those that are involved in our ways. Even for those who are on the housing board, it's like that. We usually have elders there with us, at every meeting. They may not say anything but they sit with us and listen to us. They lead us in prayers at the start of the meetings and when they talk to us we listen to them. So because of that, our minds become stronger. And these are ways like that.

So when I'm talking about that big Sportsplex building, I am just saying that if we leave something out from the past, the future turns out terrible. Anyway, there didn't seem to be many stories today, so that is why I am telling you this one. Thank you.

JOSEPH PE'A: As for those Inuit people living way out there, we may not follow them but when I went with Elizabeth MacKenzie and some of the others to the Inuit country, we noticed they had one elder sitting at their meeting. When they gave him papers, he read them. That was the way they did things. Not so long ago in Yellowknife I saw that old man; he must have been flown in for a meeting. As for our elders, we can't leave them out and that is the way it is. They know all about our ancestors' ways, all about the way our people have lived in the past. They know about all these things and that is why we cannot leave the elders out.

So you are correct in saying, we should have elders sitting with us at meetings. They can sit with us or just watch over us because in that way, we'll be strong. That's all, thank you.

JOHNNY EYAKFWO: By what we see written on the flip chart on the wall, we can see how things are today, compared to the way things used to be with us in the past. And those are the things we're talking about now.

Today, the elected M.L.A.'s have given the people control of their schools. Now we have to think back about the way things were in the past, and we have to think about children going to school and how they're attending school; we have to think why they do not understand our language well and why they do not know about our traditional ways. Today, when we think about ourselves, we recall how our

elders raised us and how we worked with them in the bush; how we set nets, how we trapped, how snow shoes were made, how axe handles were made and everything that people did in order to survive. Today, let us think of ways that we can use both ways. We want to use less of the whitemans' ways and we would like to use more of our ways. If we do that, then people will start to work well together. We have to take back the old ways and try to get the children to use them. That is what we are saying and that is what we are talking about. Personally, I may not attend school board meetings often but sometimes they talk to me and I listen. Sometimes when we drink coffee or tea around town, I listen to them talk about things they did in the past. They discuss things that have been said among themselves. They also discuss things the teacher has mentioned to them. Even here sometimes they talk about it and even by that, we can find out more about these things. So today what we are saying is, let's look at the situation and find out what is not there. Then we must put it in there so that it will last and it will be good. In that way, when we have our next meeting at Dettah, when the time comes for us to make a final decision on it, it will look good.

To prevent overlooking some things we have to look at what is good; things that will be useful concerning our people's ways. If we talk about those things, those ways will be chosen. As for the whitemans' ways, maybe it is important to a young person who is educated, but if they taught themselves more about our traditional ways together with the reading and writing, they will put them to good use for themselves. Maybe one day our children will put it to good use and use it well. That's why we want them to know more about our ways, and this is why we are talking about it today. So I'm grateful, because sometimes when we talk about some things we may not always agree with each other and we may not think alike. Those who think they are correct, those who think like that, and don't talk to each other, will not be able to find out anything. When I started talking at first, I mentioned that it was as if the people are separated, and that's the way it is as of today. And today as we are talking about it, we are saying if the two cultures were to touch and if we were able to use both ways in the schools then it would be good. That is the way we have to teach each other and we have to do what other people are doing. In that way we will advance ahead. So thank you. I'm glad to hear the things you have to say and that's about all I wanted to mention. Masi.

ELIZABETH MACKENZIE: I am not a teacher and I don't know anything but I would like to talk to you for a while, about the past. Long ago our elders taught us and then there was the old Bishop Breynat who told the orphans and the others in the schools and hospitals not to speak in their languages. When we went to school in Fort Resolution they told us not to talk in our languages, too. After that the government took control of the schools from the priests, and that was when the government people who didn't speak our language taught us their ways. That's the way it was. When we prayed, we didn't know anything about God, we knew nothing about God. Back then, for those children it was like that. So when they were teaching us, they taught us their ways only. After that, things got worse and worse up until this date.

And so I have been thinking, after all this time has past, we the native people have never helped one another. We haven't helped each other where education is concerned because we are thinking it might be better to do it the government way. So that is the way it is for children today. For example, down south, they say some Cree people don't know how to speak their own language and now, today, that's what they are learning to do. So as for us today, we have control over the children attending our schools. Native people, men or women, should be there

with the children wherever they are. I think it would be good if they had a native elder available to teach them. I am not saying these people will be elected. If we have to have elections for them, those we do not want usually end up winning. Today, I am on the school board. They are mostly young people and every time we have meetings they have arguments. It is also the same with the housing board, I am on that board too. Aside from the young people in there, Arnie Steinwand and I are the only elders. So the young people usually argue with each other. They each think, " I am the boss; I know something and it will be good if it's done my way." They also think that is the way their relatives think, so that is why they have arguments every time we have our meetings. That's what I have told Marcel Zoe and he knows about it. Maybe he might say that too! *Laughter*

So we who are the elders now, have never once received any help from our elders for as long as we were in the hospitals and the schools. As of today, there are government schools and nobody, not a single person has bothered to help our children who attend schools. Nothing at all, we don't even help at all. So because of that things have changed and changed so much. That is what I really think. So as of now, today, they say it is in our control and it is our chance now. It's our chance now!

So if we are to teach the children about survival in the bush, how to set fish nets, where rivers flow, and where the land is good; for all these things, we should choose professionals. For example, I would choose Jimmy, also Harry and Louie and Joseph. I would pick Johnny to teach religion because he's that kind of professional. So if we choose our people like that, it will be good. And as for elections, we will leave them out. So it will be good if we send our young people to what we call university after they have completed their education. So that they can train themselves to become a doctor, lawyer or policeman, and the women can also become professionals, too. When they return and if they were to join us on our boards, then it would be really good. One of my daughters works as a court worker and she told me this. She told me, "Mom, the young people who went to court last time, they are the same ones going to court again, again and again. The same ones were given good advice but they do not listen. They are not scared of the police, not at all", she said. So it will be good if one or two elders work with the policeman and the judge, because they can talk to the young people and also because they are our people and maybe in that way they will be a little frightened of them. As for the police, they are not our people but they treat them as if they are nothing. They say what they want to say with their mouth; they do whatever they want to do. Maybe the young people cannot be straightened out and that is why the same ones go back to court. It's the same thing again the next time around. That's the way it is," my daughter told me. So I have been thinking, in education, if we had our people helping us so they will become professionals, then I think it will be good. Also, it's the same for the police. Maybe in that way the children would change.

So because we didn't know anything all these years, that's why our people did not help us once. We did not help each other, so that is why a lot of things have changed, and changed so much. Nobody seems to obey us; if they want to dress differently, they do that too. It's not good, not even in a single way. So from now on, if we had those elders beginning to work with the children then it is going to be good. After they have gone to school for many years it will be possible for them to become professionals. I think in that way, things will be better.

So what if we made a strong statement and wrote it down like that? What if we, the native people, were to choose among ourselves? And what if we didn't have elections for that? Usually when we have elections or vote for someone, usually it's not good because that is the governments' way. They said because of it their words are stronger and that is why they do that. But they live as though they are doing our business and that's not good at all. We cannot think that a person knows a lot more than I and that I make more money; we cannot think that way. In the future they will live well; that's what they're striving for and that's what they're training themselves for. We don't know why we are the way we are. It's as if we are people that don't seem to help each other. That is the hating way; hatred, that's what it is. It is as though we are enemies to each other. We are not good persons for one another. We cannot be like that because we are one people. So if we help each other out, then and only then will things be better. If we don't do that, then nothing will turn out well. And that is about all I want to mention to you. Thank you.

JOHN P. MICHEL: Elizabeth is telling us what is really true concerning this election issue. Without our knowing, the young people elect one another and we don't hear about it at all. It's as if they are doing it just for the money and because of that, they ridicule each other; they don't work with each other well. That is how it is after they are elected and we are the ones who suffer.

Even me for example, if they say there's going to be an election, I usually don't hear about it. In my house, with all my nephews, there are ten of us who can vote. So for those that have been chosen to be elected without my knowing, they are doing it just for the money. And Elizabeth mentioned letting us do this without elections, and she's correct. I think it will be good if we handpick five or more people from among ourselves. I think that will be better indeed. That's what I do think.

JIMMY B. RABESCA: Concerning the schools, we have talked about them for many years. For many years, since schools began and up until today, the government had their way with us and we talked and talked about it. Just last year we finally won it. That control! The government is not the boss of us now, because we have gone on our own since last year. We from the five communities, have helped each other and we've gone our own way. So what we are discussing now is something we've talked about for many years, and we have finally won it. But we did not do it for a lot of money. If we had one meeting, we received twenty-five dollars and we worked like this for many years. That's how strong our minds were in order to win this thing. I have been on the school board for many years, and for only one year, I took a break. If the government is the boss of us and if we talk about something, our words just stay there. But whatever board we are sitting on and if our mind or will is not strong, we will not win either. Whatever board we're sitting on, if we have strong words and we follow it through, then that is how we win it.

So if we follow our good directions and work well with each other then the children will depend on our work for many years to come. Right now we're discussing the mission and goals of education since we went on our own. Sometimes as town councillors, we discuss everything and we seem to be getting in each other's way. Most people are no longer able to work with each other because they are only looking at the money that is on the table, and that is all they are looking at. As for town councillors, they have control for only five miles around the settlements. The police are their own bosses too; so too now are the school

board. That's the way it is in our land. But whoever are bosses of this situation, if they have control and responsibilities, maybe then we would not have confused each other that many times. It would have made it good for us if we had helped one another.

When there is an election and one who shouldn't win, does win, the strong motions we made, end up being overturned. It takes time to train them because they don't know anything about our previous work. So that is why it seems we are going back and forth. We flow backward and we flow forward. That is the way it is and that is not good indeed.

When we talk about something, we have to help each other and come to a conclusion. If we talk about it like that and if our will and our words are strong, then it is going to be good. Now, we are discussing how the elders have survived on the land, and we have been talking about it since yesterday. We, the young men remember how our elders have talked, how they have done things, how they have obeyed each other, how they have practiced religion and all these things we know about. When we lived in the bush, they went trapping with us. We slept without tents but we prayed all the same by the camp fires. That's how they work, in our eyes. When we are living in tent camps, when it's evening, the young people are not their own bosses and they do not walk around. It was the same for all the men and the women. Around five or seven o'clock our mothers would call for us. And we had to go home. That was how our elders worked "in our eyes". Those who were councillors or chiefs back then really worked hard, even though they didn't do it for money. And that's what we heard, how Chief Bruneau worked and how Chief Monfwi worked. Not even for one cent! Whatever they said or asked of their people, that was the way things were done. They had strong wills. It was the same too for the councillors; they didn't do it for even one cent. They had strong wills too, so whatever they said, that was the way things were done. They listened and obeyed each other. Whether it was their job or not, they didn't count it as that. That was the way it used to be in this land. That's the way we have observed them.

Since then, after money became available for the people after the Old Chief passed away, nobody obeys anymore. We don't want it to continue like that, so that is why we who are on the school board have gone our own way. So it is up to us now. In regards to education and schooling for our children, we have stated that we should find a good solution as to how we should go about doing it. That's what we have mentioned at the beginning and even up to today we're not finished discussing it. Now as we are saying this, we hear the government is talking like this and we hear all the news. How is it going to be now? We hear now, that the government is not going to take anybody's words unless they are the elder's words. Things may not be as they were in the past and there might be changes, but where education and schools are concerned we will have to try. However, I am sure it will be up to the one who wins in the election. I think about all the children who attend schools and I also think about all my children. Sometimes during the evening I pray with them and I talk to them with good words. But as soon as one speaks out, they use words that are no good. In the same way they also watch video tapes every evening. Those tapes that have come in are no good at all. That is what they look at every day and that's what they imitate. And when we want to pray, they sit by us and they just sit there. From the time they get up in the mornings, that is all they watch until it's time for them to go to sleep. They don't look at how we have to work outside or how we make our ways strong. If we travel among different people and we are asked to do something for them and we do not know how to do it, we end up getting bad words because of that. Sometimes

they will wonder, "Is his mother alive?, "Is his father living?" "Did his father talk to him?" Now when we work on this land we work in the whitemans' ways. When we go in the bush, we sit on our skidoos, we use our skidoo boots which are not good for snowshoes. We are like white people. We also get dressed up so we are no longer able to move our legs. That's the white mans' way. And when we make a camp fire, we cut spruce boughs, take out our thermos and pour out tea or coffee automatically. We don't even have to mix cream or sugar. We have nothing to worry about. We think it will be like this forever. That is not the old timers' way. But that's the way it is today, even for the young people who do trapping. It wasn't like that before, in the past, when our fathers worked with us and when we worked with them. When we ran into animals using dog teams and when the animals fled, we would put on our snow shoes as soon as we got out of our sleighs, forgetting our parkas, and with only our mitts, we would chase the caribou. Our clothes would be frosty and we would be all sweaty too. That was how we finally managed to kill something. That's how we endured hardship. Our elders who have worked that way before, they have endured hardship too and we have heard about it. What we are saying now is, let us try to take back their old ways. If we live the whitemans' way on this land, will the Lord help us? Our people have endured hardship and suffered while they lived on this land, but if not one went to God, where would we be now? So that's why when we talk about something we have to consider a lot of things while sitting at this table.

In Lac La Martre, Albert Nitsiza is on the board for us and sometimes he gives us instruction. We have asked the Divisional Board for a cabin.The last time we did that, we built two cabins in the bush and one of them burned down. So we asked for some funding and we built a cabin again. We did that because we wanted to use the cabin to teach the children out there. We teach them about trapping, we teach them about religion, how to set hooks, how to make camp fires and so on. Even this man (Jimmy Nitsiza) taught the children there this fall. Everything he knew he taught the children. That is the way we want to work and that's how we have begun. However, you are talking of elections and whoever wins in the elections, if they replace us, then it will be up to them. They will have meetings like this and whatever they say, people will be listening. We have been talking about these things since yesterday. We didn't include things that were of no use to us, just things that were useful. Yesterday we saw the videotape of Chief Jimmy Bruneau and we have started to think about it. Let's continue to have this good discussion and try to pick the good things that have been mentioned. So that when we have our next meeting in Dettah, we can make a motion on it. After that motion is made, the Minister of Education will see it. That's what we're doing it for. If it looks really good to him then he will put his name on it. We are not playing a game. Sometimes when we meet like this, people walk around out there and say, "What are they going to fix? What are they travelling for? They're going only for money. Those who don't understand English shouldn't be anything but they are something." Those words are not good at all. Long ago we recall how our elders lived on the land. We recall how they lived although they never spoke English nor did they read or write. They had strong ways because that was the way they worked. Those are the ways we are talking about today. If we don't drink alcohol, we can remember what we said five or six years ago. However, when we drink, we talk about everything and we don't remember what we said the next day. Even though someone may not understand English they may speak true, and when we talk about things like this, it's only better they are recorded. Also if someone talks to us and tells us what is true it is better to pick up his advice, because one day it will become useful.

Elizabeth MacKenzie talked to us yesterday about how she attended school and learned to read and write. That is not our way, but she talked to us about it, and we learned from that. That's why we say let us help each other. We can't say it's none of our business; we cannot think like that. We from the five communities must have good discussions on the future education of our children. It will be good for our children to learn the two cultures. For example, in my part of the country, we have asked my father-in-law Johnny Bishop, to teach the children about religion (Dogrib prayers). If something has to be done and there's enough financial assistance available, then we can work at it well. But if there's not enough money for it, then it's hard to do it. People become lazy to do it. These days work gets done mostly because of the money.

I have mentioned that I have a lot of children and one of them is this small. When she began to talk, she used swearing words. I slapped her mouth. She must have been playing with other children and they must have said that in front of her. She doesn't know what she is saying. Even that, that's the way it is. When I talked to her and when I sometimes pray with her, I have her sit beside me. But even that wasn't enough for her, for the things that were useless were what she said at first. That is not good at all. What we are saying now is, let's not let things be like that.

There are still a number of people who will speak. There is no agenda but they are recording the discussion and later they will have it in written form. I am just recalling what our elders have talked about in front of us, and that is what I wanted to mention to you. Masi!

JOHN P. MICHEL: I would like to say a few words to you briefly about the education of our children. I have no children now but I raised eleven of them. Now, our children are well educated and they speak English. The government had their way with us and now it's all over and you are saying let's leave "our ways" for our people. That's what we are discussing.

As for me, I chased all of my nephews back to school. I would cook for them; they would eat and I would send them to school whether they were happy about it or not. I did that again and again and now three of them have completed grade 12. And as for Tony, I told him to continue going to school. I also told him," You may be well-educated now but you should continue with your schooling." So after he completed grade 12, he went back to school for another few years. Last year just before Christmas he celebrated his graduation in Fort Smith and the Minister of Education said he has won something that is very important. That is why we send our children to schools. And we say the government is unpredictable! When my nephew returned home to us, the government sent him a letter. It said, "We noticed you have completed your schooling, so work with us and whatever amount of money you worked for before, I will pay you three times that amount." That's what the government said to him when they asked for his services. So I told him, " It can't be like that, what are you saying, my nephew? Your father has passed away. Now you are well educated and have completed your schooling but you didn't go to school to work for the government. We know we need money to survive on this land, but you can't only work for the money. I have raised you and you have many uncles and grandfathers still living. So work for us and with us. I have raised you and I know we need money to survive, but you will not work for the government". That's what I said to him. Now he's out there working for our people. What Elizabeth has mentioned is true for me. Back then, we were not taught anything except about our ways. Now it's our last chance, and we say let's work together. For me that's true and that's all I want to say to you. Masi cho!

JOHN B. ZOE: Long ago before the white people came, our people used to teach each other. We taught the children by telling them stories and having them watch the adults work. Those ways are no longer visible and it is like a darkness has come over us. Our ways are no longer there, and our children learn the wrong way. When that old man (Chief Jimmy Bruneau) talked for us, maybe he knew this would happen and that is why he spoke the way he did. It is as if he put a little bit of something in that darkness. It is as if he put the foundation there for us. We have used his words to teach each other and now if we have a strong foundation, it will be good to help each other build on it. It's as if we are finally putting down the foundation and now we are ready to build something. What we are about to build is something like a house but since we're talking about education, the direction we go and how it will be administered are the materials. If the little children going to school are taught well, they'll be good people. Later on when they are on their own and have their own houses, when it's time for them to speak for themselves, they will make a name in our way. Until that time their relatives will still have control over them. Those are our ways. When the children go to school, all those ways are there in education. It is all in there. It's like hunting to have meat on the table so that people may eat. It's like a job, if one had a job, to put something on the table so that people can eat. If a man goes hunting, he does so because he was taught how to do that and he hunts well. As for those people who used to do hunting, I am sure they weren't always sitting in a warm place; they must have been patient; things must have been terrible some days, but they did it that way because they wanted to have something on their tables. They didn't want terrible things to happen to them, so they looked out for each other and worked like that. It's the same when children attend school. If they know their job well and they want to know more about it, that is when they take more training. In that way things become better for them and their people. So concerning those ways and children attending schools, we're telling them, "You have a job and you know about your work. Watch out for yourself; don't bother with things that are useless; don't be reckless but be patient and if you work like that then you will live a good life." It's as if we are saying that to each other, too. The old timers didn't think things were hard. Some things were heavy, but they packed them over portages. Their minds were very strong. There are a lot of stories like that about them. There are stories about them walking long distances with snowshoes too. Those men were strong. Whether it was cold or not, their minds and bodies were always strong.

As for the young men, they have jobs and they know their work; they have patience. Although they may not live in the old timer ways and they may live in settlements, if they hang on to those ways, then they will become strong. So we must put the foundation there and after the house is built with "our ways", children will learn all about the white culture and they will know all about the native culture. That person in their mind will act like a native person. They will have a strong mind and whatever they set their mind to do, they will accomplish it. They will always remember their people, because it was through them and by them that they turned out to be that type of a person. Others have helped to teach them so they end up thinking that they would like to give a little back. So from what they have learned, they end up teaching others. As for this one (*points to example on flip charts*) this part where we were in darkness, we'll be given that story and we will try to make it become visible. That's our goal!

JOSEPH PE'A: One time, Old Chief Bruneau came walking by snowshoe to the rocky point, where we were making camp fires. He said, "Maybe I look wrinkled

and old but I'm sure this evening old Mrs. Henry Lafferty will be kissing me." His in-law told him, "Who's going to kiss you, you are not cute enough!" That evening we went to Henry Lafferty's house and we walked in on them. The Chief came in and they raised a commotion. They didn't want to have a holiday without him. So he shook all of their hands and when he came to old Mrs. Henry Lafferty, she held onto his neck and kissed him. So he exclaimed, "Hey, hey look at that, I told you she was going to do it!". If his wife was with him, I wonder what he would have told her? He (Old Chief Bruneau) never said he was tired, even though he walked long distances with snowshoes. Later on he walked all the way back to Snare Lake. He had a strong mind like that; the old timers had strong minds like that when they lived on this land. Maybe they didn't know how to read or write but they had strong wills. So I'm glad you're all saying these things and from the example on the flip-chart, if all our ways are included in education, then it's going to be good indeed. My in-law, Jimmy, talked and said the kids watch videotapes and pick up ways that are no good. Even me, for example, I didn't know anything bad at first, so now I watch those tapes and now I know everything! *Laughter*

LOUIE WHANE: When I think about what Jimmy has mentioned, for me, he's more than half right. In my presence Old Chief Bruneau was asked something by "Blackhair". It was done in front of my eyes because I lived in his house. Today we say, because of the money that's on the table, we have lost our way. We say that and it's true. Blackhair was the game warden in mountain country and when he finished, the government gave him time off for working that long. He flew back here and he went to Edzo. Around noon, Joe Drybone and Blackhair came walking over and I said, "Uncle, I didn't expect "Blackhair" . Why are they walking over here?" He told me to get some chairs for them, so that's what I did and Blackhair said, "We have worked well together at Snare Lake and after that I worked as a game warden in the mountain country. I worked for as long as I was asked to and today, I am going to retire. That is why I came back here. I'm going to live in Edzo and I came to shake your hand", he mentioned. From then on he started to talk about money. Blackhair said he had worked many years and now the one he had worked for pays him every month to sit like this until his death. He said he would never worry about money. He continued talking like that to Chief Bruneau. "As for you," he told grandfather, "you have been a Chief for almost thirty years. You have been the Chief for that long, and you have worked for your people. You have worked well for them and we know all about it. Things don't get confused with you. Today as you're sitting here, there's money available in your name. I know about it because I have papers here that I brought along to you. You have earned it and it's your money. You'll get something every month because you're an elder now and may not live that long. You'll get paid $500 every month and you'll receive one cord of wood. And for your people, you'll get two forty-five gallon drums of fuel, which will be by the shore, on your boat dock. Whoever goes to his nets and says he has no gas can pour some of it out. That's what you have won", he told him. But when the Old Chief spoke on something, he took his time. Blackhair told him, "I have told you how much money you have available and you have won it. Other people would have not won it but you have." Grandfather didn't say anything for quite a long while and finally he said, "Yes, concerning that money you're talking about, if I did what you ask, I would receive $500 every month but if you fix-up the papers for me then as far as the government is concerned I will be nothing to them. They will talk "down" to me", he said. Maybe if they said that to the other Chiefs and councillors, they would have gone for it because they'll want to get paid every month. What Jimmy says is true because today we get paid for every meeting each day and because of that, all the

people seem to have spread out and separated. Before, people didn't get paid and the Old Chief was correct when he said what he had to say. The Old Chief said, "When I have passed away and others replace me, the day they touch it, (the government money), from then on, things will change." That's what he said and that is what this present situation is all about. People seem to have lost their way.

Although a person may be nothing, if he really talks straight it will be good if he is recorded on tapes. Now for example, some say,"Let's have only those who understand English on the boards." Before, did those who understand English settle things for them? Did those who knew how to read or write settle things for them?

When you're sitting up there in an airplane or looking out there on the land, there doesn't seem to be anything out there. That's the way it looks, but that is where the people come from and for some who still think about themselves, their children still eat from the land. They also cleaned the ground near the old mission for them, but do you see anything growing? It's been said Edzo cleaned that ground, but do you see anything growing there? Strong words touched that ground, and on it, just small grasses grow now. Since Edzo fixed those things for us we haven't stood correctly on this land. Things change and change. Now, it's all for money only. If we never had someone who spoke English as chief, things could have been the way they were; nothing could have changed with us.

Later on, they made statements saying anybody who drinks cannot be on the council. So because of that a lot of people were let go. So as of today, those who represent us, what's happening with them? They know a lot of things and they know how to read and write. A person who doesn't know how to read or write but uses his head to really think, it's the same as if he knows how to read or write. We came in from out on the land and today some of our ways are being forgotten. Why do you think it's that way, those of you who live in Ft. Rae? This didn't happen just here but all over the country. I live in Snare Lake and I haven't seen anybody go out by boat to check nets. Some of them, those who do think for themselves, maybe they do have nets set out there. What has occurred here in Ft. Rae, has also happened all over. Now it's all the whitemans' way. When our kids get up in the mornings, they open up cans, make toast and that's it.

We cook meat really well for them, but if they don't want to eat meat sometimes they don't. Sometimes, I move back to Ft. Rae and I haven't seen anyone go out by boat to check nets here. And that hasn't occurred only here but all the other places as well. We used to work using dog teams. We didn't want our dogs to suffer during freeze up, so we would move to places where there were fish, and we would collect and store lots of stickfish. We had good, busy jobs then, but now we've done away with that life and it's no more. Long ago, we used to come into Ft. Rae for Christmas and the New Year by dog teams. The dogs used to be howling and barking.

When we went to Fort Smith, the "big boss" talked to us. He was more than half right too. He told us these things and I wasn't the only one who heard; there were others like Joseph Judas, and Alexis Arrowmaker. While we were in Fort Smith, he talked to us and said these things. "After Chief Monfwi settled things for you, who replaced him?" he asked. "Nobody ever replaced him until he went into the ground. While he lived on this land, he lived with something that was strong. So he thought about the one who was going to replace him, and he spoke about it. So the one you call "old Chief Bruneau" took his place.You should live like Chief

Bruneau, on this land. But you ridicule and tease each other and the government out there in Ottawa is really happy about it. You keep replacing each other and they are really happy about it. The government wants to change you around as if you're in your sleep and if that happens and it goes across the big river (Mackenzie River) and if it reaches Ft Rae, you will be poor," he said. "So try to mend your ways in a hurry," he told us," and this thing your ancestors have worked for, hold on to only that. What I'm telling you about, I know," he told us. "I see it," he said. He told us not to place anybody who understood English ahead of us to represent us. The "big boss" in Ft. Smith spoke to us and told us that. Now you'll notice that all the councillors sitting around the table will all be young guys. Not one of them will speak out though, so why do they get paid every month? They are useless, so it would be better if they didn't get paid. We cannot say that is right at all and they say, "If someone drinks, he can't be a councillor." I wonder what the present councillors do? I see them in Yellowknife and I know they drink . But back then, we who are Dene, back then when we used to be councillors we didn't understand English, we didn't read or write, but we attended assemblies and there were a lot of people. When they had cameras there we didn't move and we were not nervous either. So we talked and said what we have to say using lots of hand gestures. Now, not one councillor comes to visit us, so that we could talk to them. Like here for example,we are discussing what is important so that our children will live well. We are saying we don't want anything bad to happen to our kids, but not one of them is here to listen to us. Maybe for them it's not important, but it is for their children! So we should really think about this, and if we put something in there about our ways it will be really strong. And that is about all I have been thinking about and that's all I wanted to say. Masi!

JOE MANTLA. What Jimmy has mentioned is true. Since things have started with us and up until today, people don't obey one another and it's true when we say that. You have also discussed school board elections and regarding that, you have also said what is true. When they have school board elections, we replace one another every year. Sometimes white people come into our land and they are also on some boards. Some even replace our people and if there's a contract for some work to be done, they take it without our knowledge. They take away our jobs and our money. That's what they do. As for the elections you're talking about, because people do replace each other, if a white person is chosen, will "our ways" still be there? Now when we look at T.V. we notice that only people who have "grey white hairs" are the type of people who work for the government. Those type of people who work for the government think they are always right. As for grandfather (Old Chief Bruneau), he really talked the truth. Suppose he faced another elder from down south. Suppose one from this cold country and one from the government down south were to face each other, whose words do you think would be stronger? Old Chief Bruneau worked all over this part of the land. So if he was to face another elder with "grey hairs" from the government down south, and if they were to talk about our ways, Chief Bruneau would probably end up taking over the conversation, because he is talking about what he knows about. Now they are saying, "Let's have those young people who understand English and know how to read and write be there representing us." Also you have mentioned that because of the money that's on the table, things have changed with us, and people don't obey each other, You've said these things and you're correct. And you've also told us what the big boss from Ft. Smith has told you; he's telling the truth, too. The white people know about our situation. Maybe we're sitting here and they are sitting out there, but they know about us.

So thank you, you're all talking correctly without leaving a single thing out; the way we have worked in the past. You're discussing how we could bring our ways back, thinking of how we could do it, and it's correct too. If we were to throw away those traditional ways, what would happen? We have to say something and that's why I just thought I'd say these few things briefly. Masi.

JOHN B. ZOE: It's getting close to lunch time, so we'll have Joe Erasmus say a few words and then we'll have dinner. And we'll return back here at 1:00 p.m.

JOE ERASMUS: You are all talking the truth. I just thought I'd say a few words on that. I attended school when I was young and what Elizabeth has said is the truth for me. I went down south for about three years. At that time the nuns taught us and our people didn't teach us. We were taught mostly in the whitemans' ways. So that was the way I was taught. After I came back here, I knew mostly the white way and didn't speak our language very well. Even now I don't speak my language well, so that is why I hold on to the whitemans' way. We can't say it is all bad because some is good. We read and write and can take more training, and it's good. But as for our elders and relatives talking to us and giving advice, there's nothing like that. They used to talk to us because after I came back home, I still remember some of the things my mother told me. I remember her words. John B. Zoe has mentioned that it's as if we're sitting in the dark and I have sat in that darkness. I have been involved with alcohol and you probably know about that. I have been involved with drinking. Even after I got married, I was still involved with alcohol. So I didn't know how I was going to talk to my children and it was as if I was in darkness. So recently I gave up alcohol because I thought, it can't be like that for my kids. I didn't want them to follow that example, so that's why I gave it up. As for that darkness I was in, I am still teaching myself. It's still dark for me but by listening to you talking like this I am teaching myself and learning a little bit. Now I am forty years old and I am still learning. I was in Fort Smith and maybe that's why you haven't seen me around. I went there in the fall time and I got back here recently. What you say about your children and television is true because it is like that in my house too. When my children watch television and I talk to them they don't listen to me. So I tell them,"You can't always watch T.V.", and if they have homework to do, I tell them to do that first and then play outside with their friends because they can't always watch television. Even now, I still hold on to the whiteman's ways. I don't even know how to say my prayers in Dogrib at all. I usually pray in the English language but our Creator knows everything, so He will understand English, too. I am saying this because I too, have been in the darkness.

So the way John B. Zoe wrote his example on the flip-chart is good. I am heading this way right now, and even though I am this old, I am still learning. I just wanted to say that I've picked up a little of what you're all talking about in a good way, and that's all I wanted to mention. So thank you and that's all I have to say.

JOE PE'A: Suppose our children were to learn in our language and in English equally. And suppose that example John gave us on that flip chart was introduced in our schools. We the people and our children, from the five outlying communities will be able to talk to one another in our language. We can't always talk to our children in English. There are two languages. We are the people and our children have to talk in our language. If we talk to them only in English because that's all they understand, then they will never know our way. Our ways are not written down, only the white ways are written. It has been like that for a long time. That is not good at all. We all want our children to learn our language and our ways. We

also want them to learn all our other traditional ways, and then it will be good. Maybe they'll quit using what is useless for them such as alcohol. If we were to include more religion and have someone who knows the Bible talk to the children about these things maybe then they would quit using what's not good for them. We were not born only for this world, we were also born for heaven. We'll be happy for eternity if we get to heaven. It has been said and it's probably true that if we don't live in this world properly and always use what is not good for us, and not bother to remember our Lord, we will burn for eternity. So to avoid that, to avoid our children from abusing these useless things, we should have one person who knows the Bible talk to the children about these things. And maybe in that way things will improve. That's about all I have to say. Masi!

ALPHONSE QUITTE: You are right, indeed! You are all correct in what you say. We all understand each other because we're speaking in our language. We are not speaking in English, so we understand each other. We're talking about the children attending school and we're doing what's right. I am grateful to be doing this. I have three kids the same size. One of them is my own and I raised the other two. All three of them don't attend school at all because I want to teach them the way I worked with my father. I want to teach them those ways, so that's why I stop them from attending school. As for my son's little child , the one I have raised, I brought him to school before he reached school age. I told the teacher, "He's not old enough to go to school but I want him to come." The teacher said, " No, he can't." But I told him, "No it's not like that, you can't wait until he's old enough to go to school. I want him to attend school now and he's going to go to school." So he is not old enough to attend school, but he does so, until this date. As for those other three, they don't attend school. I want to teach them my culture and traditional skills, so I made them live my way, and maybe I'm not the only one who has done that; there are others who have children, they're probably doing that , too. If they want to check their nets in the lake, they do that. If they want to go hunting, they do that. If they want to set traps, they do that too. So that's how they are doing things in my traditional way and it is good. But now, when I think about it, there are those who say, "If children haven't been trained or gone to school, they will not be able to get jobs." I think about it and wonder why I did this to my children to this day.

If my children were taught to read and write, maybe they could have read about these things to me and told me about it. I wonder why I did it to them and that's what I'm thinking about, as I sit here. I wanted them to live the way I have livedbut how will it be for them in the future? Everything that we are discussing on the flip chart is all true. There is no bad wording in there, only important issues and now we're discussing them well.

We the elders sitting here understand each other when we talk. When the councillors have their own meetings, they have their own issues to discuss but as I am sitting here I am worried about that too. Maybe if one or two of them sat with us they would consider what we are discussing. But not one of them is sitting with us. I'm not ridiculing them because I've worked with them for three years and I've also worked with school boards too, with Harry Simpson. As for the other young people who were there on the board for one year, maybe they have spoken out on these issues, I don't know. And now at this meeting, we are saying, "Let's take back our elder's ways and introduce our ways and the whiteman's ways into the school curriculum equally." That's what we're discussing and it is good, and all these examples they have written on the flip chart, all these ways, we're saying,

"Let's try to make them as one." I'm grateful because you have all mentioned these things.

When John B. Zoe gave us an example and said, "It's as if we've been in the darkness", why do you think we've been in the darkness? That's because we've been into things that were of no use to us. If we were not involved with these "useless things" maybe we wouldn't have been in darkness. It looks as if the councillors can't solve that problem (alcohol abuse). Even those who have been elected (M.L.A.'s), it looks as if they can't solve it. And what are we? We're not councillors, but if we discuss our Dene ways and that "darkness" that is there, perhaps there will be a little light. I am worried about it and that is why I've mentioned it. Unfortunately that is not all. If there is a bingo game announced, all the people will go there, but if the church bells ring for a mass, not one single person goes to church. They are playing for money, so that is why they go to bingos. It's the same thing for drinking. Right now, a lot of young men have gone to the bush trapping. What is going to happen if they come back and have lots of money? Maybe they will think because they have lots of money that they can buy that which is of no use for them, like alcohol. They don't think about their needs or what they're lacking. We can't say that is good. It is the same for card games. If it is past midnight and we had cards in our house, how's it going to be? Will our Creator pity us? So all these three things I've mentioned belong to one who's bad. And it's probably written in the Bible, too. So we can't be involved with these three things equally all the time. If we were to discuss everything from the past and how things are today, we could spend the whole day talking about it, but we wouldn't be able to complete our discussion.

That's what I want to mention to you. When we talk about our Lord's words or religion, we mean something that is really good. If more of that is included in the curriculum, it will be good. Maybe I don't understand English very well, but the Education Council has asked me to teach the children religion and Dogrib prayers. I've told the priest it will be hard for me. If I knew how to read and write, I could have been teaching the children and at the same time teaching them about religion too. You may not know how to read or write, but it will be alright, he told me. Some years ago when I was involved with them, I taught the children Dogrib prayers. Later the Education Council let me go but about a year later, they chose me again and we started to teach the children Dogrib prayers again.

Maybe I don't pray with them for long, but I tell them to think about this or that when they pray. I talk to them for a while and then I lead them in prayers. That's what I do with them because our Lord's words are excellent, and if they get to know it right away, then it will be very good. That is what I think. But for those who have kids attending school, if they help each other a little bit and talk about these things, it would be better. It could be better, if they would tell their children to listen to the person who is speaking and praying with you. In that way the children would want to learn their prayers better. When I started to teach them the prayers, there were a lot of them and they were mischievous, so I took some candies in my pocket for them and placed them on the table beside me. I said, " I will not give candy to whoever is naughty and moves while we're praying."So they stopped being naughty and moving around.

I am grateful because we're saying,"Let's include our ways in the curriculum." I'm really thankful with all my mind and heart. With all the people who have talked here, it's as if it is all the same, one word. There is nothing included that is bad and when we talk like that I'm grateful. I have said this yesterday and again today

because I would like to support you, the people. I feel grateful and that's all I wanted to mention to you. Masi!

JOHN P. MICHEL: We have had these two days of meetings and we have reached a consensus. If we support each other and help each other it is good indeed. We work for the Lord, for nothing, it's true too. We are saying let our people live well and proper. This woman Elizabeth Quitte who is sitting by me, she has worked for many years for the mission and she probably wants to say something because she attended schools many years ago. She also listened to the words her relatives spoke to her and she thinks about all these things. I would like her to say a few words.

ELIZABETH QUITTE: Yes and thank you. It is better if we ask one another to talk at a meeting like this. Maybe we wonder why some people don't talk although they are among us? We don't know what is in each others minds or hearts while we are sitting here. We don't know about one another, only God knows that. I feel grateful because I've sat here among you for two days and I've listened to you. In the past I've been a councillor, and I just sat listening for a year and didn't do any talking. I just listened and picked up words and it's as if I put them in my pockets. Now two years have passed and we've had an election so just when I wanted to take them out of my pockets and say something, I am no longer a councillor! I have heard them say many times, "The women are useless; it's no good to have the women sit among us." That, however I don't want to talk about and anyway I have a better job over at the Mission. Mrs. Elizabeth MacKenzie talked about where she attended school and that's what I want to talk about first. That's where I went to school too. She said that she was there five years before me. She mentioned 1942 and that was five years before me. After her time I was there with Joe Tobie who's sitting here, also Philip Beaulieu, John Tsatchia and his two brothers from Rae Lakes, Rosalie Wetrade and Philip Mantla's wife Madelaine and others. How did we go over there? My two younger sisters were with me. The missionaries used to take us across Great Slave Lake by wooden barge. My grandfather was the one who raised me but if I was to say I stayed only in one house, I would be lying. My mother and father didn't raise me. I wasn't always with them because my grandfather picked me and my brother first. When my brother Jimmy got a little older, they gave him back to my parents as they thought he would be useful. As for me, I'm a girl so what was I useful for? What could I have done for him and why did he keep me and raise me? When I was nine years old, my grandfather passed away. I still remember what he told me in the past. I still remember when people from Lac La Martre or from north of Rae Lakes came to Fort Rae, they would go to his house. They were like one people. They had scarfs tied around their heads like headbands. They had belts tied around their waists, over their caribou hide parkas and I didn't know who they were. So finally, I asked my auntie and said," Who is that?" She told this one is that person and so on and so on. But I didn't know them. When my grandfather passed away, I finally went to Fort Resolution across Great Slave Lake. I stayed there for four years. Mrs. Elizabeth MacKenzie said during those times, we didn't see our families and relatives for five years, but when I was there, it wasn't like that. At about this time, we would come back here and we would stay with our relatives for one week.

In those times, we considered the sisters like our mothers. They kept us well with whatever they had. We didn't wear the clothes we went there with as they took all of them away from us. We used only the clothes they gave us. I went to kindergarten first and then less than a year later, they placed me in grade one. All day long, I practiced on the blackboard with alphabets and numbers, but what it

was I was practicing I did not know. So the sister started to teach me. I was in grade one and later on, I went to grade two. I stayed there for one year. After that I went to grade three. There were three class rooms at that time and I went to all of them. After that they asked me if I wanted them to send me out to attend grade five and six, but I told them no. So I only took up to grade three and I was not there in school to take grade four. Back then, when we got to be a little bit older, they would put us to live among the older girls. We had jobs and chores in the laundry room and the sewing room, and we also cleaned up and swept there. They also made us do all the other work like in the kitchen, or the dining room where the sisters and the priests ate. We did that for about a year. After that we went home and we had to cross Great Slave Lake. Maybe Joe Tobie was there, maybe not, I don't remember. We had to cross right in the middle of Great Slave Lake and the wooden barge they used was an old thing. It looked as if it was loose and wobbly. They had a yellow tarpaulin pitched over it and it was open, in front and in the back. You could see right through both ways. In the back, there was an old tug boat with an old diesel engine tied to it. It was tied with two big ropes. I remember a storm came up, the clouds turned dark, it started to rain and the wind started to blow. This happened with us right in the middle of Great Slave Lake. My sister and I and the rest of them were being tossed around in the barge. The rope broke and the boys who were in the barge, they too were being tossed around. What could we do as we were in the barge and paddles were of no use. We went through terrible times and the sisters were there sitting with us. They took up their rosaries and started to pray. They prayed while this went on for a long, long time until finally I thought we would die right there. Everything in that wooden barge would roll over to this side and that side and the little children that were light were being tossed here and there and water poured in everywhere. However, we finally made it through so with the Lord's help, we finally could see land. That was when I finally breathed a sigh of relief. That's what happened to me and to this date it's been many years. I am now going on sixty-six years old and I feel thankful to my Lord to be still on this land. That was the way I went to school. After that, I came back here and worked for one year in the old hospital with Rosa. Then I went to live in the bush. Sometimes, I would go with my grandmother. I have also lived with Moise Martin, my uncle, for one year. Sometimes I also lived with my grandmother and sometimes I went back to my mother for awhile. Old Chief Bruneau was my godfather and I have lived with his family for a year too. At one time we took off paddling from here in canoes built for two. When we got to the end of Russell Lake and the others went to sleep, I thought about this. Why in the world did I do this? Why? As I went to sleep I cried. I thought about my grandmother and my auntie and I wanted them. So I made my mind strong and I went to sleep and then I didn't worry. The next day we took off again by paddling. And so we went over many portages. The dogs followed us along the shorelines. When our elders say they have worked in pitiful situations it is really true. That's how we worked and when we got to Nodi t'ai ti we stayed for freeze up. I have done these things and I have worked like that with people. Elizabeth MacKenzie knows about that too. Over at "Da ts'e ti k'e" we also stayed there for freeze up and there were seven tents. Elizabeth knows; at that time she had about two children. We've lived with the Mackenzies there too and she knows how we have worked.

I also wanted to talk about the wearing of dresses and the young girls. Not a single one of them wears dresses anymore. They wear only pants. In the past, we wore only dresses. Elizabeth knows that. She used to trample through deep snow while packing her kids and I remember that. I wasn't married at that time and I didn't have any kids. My grandmother Elise and the three of us lived in one tent on our own, close to my uncle, and that was how we worked, too. We'd wade through

deep snow to our knees so we could gather spruce boughs. And we have done all kinds of work. That's why I have said, I used to check the nets with my auntie, here in Rae. We used to take the fish back using a dog team. We used to do that about twice a day. Now, people think we have never done things like that before. Sometimes when I'm at home with my children, I talk to them and tell them about these things but they don't respond, they just watch television. You say because of that they don't listen, and that's how it is.

If I don't put wood in the fire, nobody does it. If their father doesn't put wood in the fire, nobody does it. Sometimes I ask them to put about two logs in the fire and they say, "Peter, you do it", " Gilbert, you do it", "Adeline, you do it" and they keep saying you, you, you do it, and it never gets done. They just keep looking at the T.V. That wasn't the way I was taught. I was also taught in school but until this day I haven't picked up a pencil. So I don't write things down because I don't read from books anymore. Nothing at all. But I speak from memory. I think about what I want to talk about and I talk about it. I don't want to talk by following what is on paper. But to this day, I still remember. I still know how to write and I still know how to read books. I was taught how to read and write syllabics too, back in Fort Resolution. That's why my grandfather has told me, "Grandchild you have something that's good to think by and it's going to be yours." However, I have never talked by it or used it. I have never said, it is like that way or this way. Why should I talk? My uncle asked me to say a few words here and I was really happy to do that.

I've worked for about ten years doing volunteer work at the mission and I haven't taken a single copper penny. If you go into the church, you can see how everything looks; you can see how things look for the Christmas holidays. All these things are in our hands and we say how things should be, and that is how we work. All the money you donate to the church for the mass and the money at the collection is usually sent to the poor when they are in need and that's how we help them. If the priest mentions something concerning the poor, I tell him yes, we should give them this much money. Sometimes we help those who are in need from here with the collection money. My uncle was in trouble and in need and that's what we did for him. The money was about $300.00 and we gave it to him like that. We told him, "It's for you, you can do what you want to do with it because you're in need. You can buy whatever you want." So that is what we have done.

You've also mentioned something about books of syllabics. You say our children don't know anything about syllabics and for me, you're truly correct. I have been singing hymns from that book of syllabics for ten years now. I would stand there and sing for you in church. Now I'm a mature woman and it would be good if I could teach the boys and girls. I have said that a lot of times and I have done so. Who is going to take our place when we are dead? Sometimes when we led the congregation with hymn singing, I would listen to them, in the back. I would do this on purpose and shut my mouth as I stand up front. Just the men would be singing a little bit and as for the women there didn't seem to be anything. So sometimes they help the other sing. We also get sore throats so I usually have some throat medicine in my mouth. Sometimes if I didn't have any, I would ask the priest for some.

I would be grateful if we could teach some people how to sing hymns using the book of syllabics. Starting from Monday, December 19th, they will be practicing to sing Christmas songs and whoever wants to practice with them can do that. They

practice in English, Dogrib, Slavey and also in Chipewyan. The syllabics books are all in Chipewyan. We teach the young girls the syllabics "A, E, I, O," because I have learned these in Fort Resolution. I know all the hymns and I can close the book and sing by heart. I've told Mary Madelaine that I've done it so often now I can sing without the book. For example, there were no books in my uncle's house, but we still sang. We sang hymns for him after we prayed. He asked us why we didn't carry any books, so I pointed to my head. We sang whatever we remembered for him. It would be good if we got involved with this right away. If we were to teach our children, they would all sing like one.

Christmas is drawing near, so whoever wants to be involved, can come be with us. I may be in charge for the priest, for the mission, but I haven't been on the school board. I haven't attended their meetings before, either. So it's my first time listening to them. I'm listening and I hear good words, but if I sit with the Band Councillors, they're different. It's not the same as it is here. That's the way it is. If one of them doesn't want to speak, he doesn't say anything. So they end up asking each other, "What's the matter with you?" So I tell them," Be quiet! I am sitting with you and listening to you. I may be the only woman among you but I'm not afraid of you." "That's the way grandfather spoke", I'd tell them. "Nothing was impossible for him and that was the way he lived", I'd tell them. So now, I'm grateful because you're talking about religion and about teaching the children our ways and about teaching them our language. For example, when we went to school, we didn't always hear our language spoken. Today, we're like teachers for our children and that is good. My in-law mentioned he doesn't know how to read or write. He doesn't know how to write his name but that doesn't count as long as they teach the children about our ways. I have said I've worked here and there with various people and I've learned by their example. If my auntie sewed I'd observe her. I haven't asked anyone how we do this. I have worked that way by myself and that is how we say we teach each other. I know you are serious where the kids are concerned when you say these things. I'm thankful. If they're educated very well, it's going to be good. We're saying, "Let's take that control into our hands to teach the children about our ways." I am really glad for what they have said. Let's have our people teach them the way it used to be as before in the past. Let's have things that are good included and leave out things that are bad. In that way we can thank our Lord.

So after you've all returned to your part of this land, we will gather to pray for each other once in awhile, and if we remember each other by that, then we'll be grateful. That is all I want to say. Masi!

JIMMY B. RABESCA: A young man from Fort Franklin works as a priest because he has worked like that for a long time. After Napoleon Kenny passed away, there was nobody there to act as a priest. We phoned Fr. Pochat here in Rae and he phoned all over for us but could find no-one. At that time, my wife and I were there. Since that young man had worked for the priest for a long time he wore the priest's clothes and did the funeral services in the priests' way. He gave communion and that was good, too. Those are the ways we are talking about and that is the reason why the priests have pleaded with us for many years. Today, there are seven communities without priests and there won't be any priests coming up here anymore. So while we still have time, let's teach each other what the priest is saying.

That young man has worked like that for many years. On Sundays, he puts on the priests clothes, gives the people communion and preaches to the people.

Sometimes he talks to the people through tears. He's a native person just like me and you and by his example, we should think about it. When we talk like this, following what is written on paper, I think about the Inuit people. Some of the Inuit people may not understand English, but they write in their language as if they were writing in English. They write in their language using syllabics. They all have papers in front of them. They don't need translators for themselves. They write the way you see my nephew, Philip, is sitting writing, and they are writing in their own language.

ELIZABETH QUITTE: That's the way it is if you know how to read and write in syllabics. You can do it fast. You remember all the symbols and that's what you write. That's how it is. Before I used to write only in syllabics but I gave it up. I haven't given up singing using the book of syllabics. Before I only used to know how to write love letters in syllabics! That's about all I know. *Laughter*

JOHNNY EYAKFWO: I have come in yesterday and today and written everything down in my notebook as you have been talking. Now I have nothing to write on. When I leave my settlement to attend meetings anywhere, I sit at the table like this, listen, and do my writing in syllabics. In my house I have a suitcase that is about this size and is just full of all the writings I've done. I have the year, the month, the date I have had meetings. Also I write down who leads off with prayers, who acted as the chairman and read the agenda, and I have all the participants' names written down too. I can do all of this in syllabics.

We have seen Old Chief Bruneau on videotape and he gave us ideas. Elizabeth Mackenzie has talked to us; so has Elizabeth Quitte. They've talked about their schooling and how things went with them. These people have learned by past examples and today they talked to us about it. So we thank the Lord and that is what we have to think about. It is as if we've taken something good out for each other.

Today things have changed. We are saying let's not let it continue like this and when we say that, we are only right in saying so. Back in my land for example, there's an old lady staying by herself. There was this young man who was staying there at Snare Lake and that old lady told him, "There's no firewood in my house, so split some for me and I'll give you $5.00." So he split a log about this size and after he did that, he brought it in the house. So she said to him, "I asked you to split some wood for me so why did you bring in so few logs?" And he said, "I have split one piece of firewood for you and that's big enough but this $5.00 is not big enough." That's what she told me he said. Today that is the way things are, but things were not like that in the past. We don't want things to be that way in the future and that's what we're discussing with each other. In the past, if any of our relatives ever talked to us or asked us to do anything, we would never have said it's like this or that and we would never have talked back to them. We did things that had to be done. In the mornings when we got up, our parents would tell us, " You still have whatever you ate yesterday in your stomach so go outside and cut and chop one or two logs before you eat. It is true that was how people were raised. That is our way. Today when they see that there is no coffee, they will shout "Hey! why isn't there any coffee?" They also say, "What am I going to eat, there's nothing here." There's meat there, but when they see that, they say, "I'm not going to eat meat." That isn't our way; that is the whitemans' way. Today, let's not let it be that way. In the past, we have lived poor on this land, but let us take back those old ways. If we are to live only in the whitemans' way, we'll be talking about the way everyone else is working and we'll be wasting our words

and talking for nothing. Maybe one day things will turn out better for us. If we think about it, we have to remember the Lord a lot more, that's the only way. We say that and we are only right.

JOHN B. ZOE: Last week, there was a program on television about Snare Lake. Maybe you haven't seen it yet so let's look at it for awhile. Later on we'll be finished, because the people from Lac La Martre have to leave to Yellowknife for their flights.

ELIZABETH MACKENZIE: We have all understood each other well. We have had a good discussion. So from now on if things work out, our children will get a good education. A long time ago when I was small I heard one phrase or one word that was not good and I used to think about it for the future. Maybe we're not too smart, but if a phrase or word is not good, we remember it for a long time. A long time ago, when we were in the convent, we were nothing and we didn't know anything. We were a long way from our parents and relatives, and that was how we lived with the sisters. There were Chipewyan children from Fort Smith, also Metis children and all the children from Fort Resolution, Hay River, Snowdrift and some from Yellowknife and Dettah. I remember the words the children from Fort Resolution would use against us. That is what I recall as I sit here today. Those Chipewyan children, those Chipewyan girls, would call out to us, "You Dogrib are good for nothing!" I have heard those words many times. Maybe because of that, I am on the school board today and I'm thankful. I have been on the school board for many years. Since we are named from a part of a dog, they thought we would never be able to do anything. So that's why they called us "good for nothing Dogrib". I thought about those words a lot and I was mad because of that. I kept it inside and it's no good. So now, I'm going to take it out! *Laughter*

They called us "good for nothing Dogrib" and I thought, in the future when we are still living, will we still be called that? How is it going to be? That's what I used to think, back then. So they used to say that and now many years have passed and these "good for nothing Dogrib" have control of their schools; they control the store and they also control the Sportsplex. If we train ourselves for something, that's how things turn out. In Lac La Martre they also have control of some things and it is the same in Rae Lakes, Snare Lake, Yellowknife and Dettah. I'm grateful, I'm really thankful because of that. Why did we call each other that, I thought. So back then, I was mad but today I'm thankful because of it and today, I finally brought it out. We who are called Dogrib today, if we don't have poor ways; if we don't call each other names like that, then I think we will be strong. So from now on, I want our children who will be attending school to complete their education. After they have completed their schooling, I want to see them work in the bush like those white people who count animals to see how many baby animals are born. When white people come here you see them write something on bird's eggs. Those things, our people can do easily, our grandchildren. They can do that easily. So I want our children to train themselves in all fields. I want them to train in all fields and not leave one out. I want them to study Social Studies and Economic Development. I want them to see the lands that our elders lived on. Good things are growing on the land, good things are growing under water, where there are high hills and mountains. I want them to learn about all these things. I want them to learn everything. So for that to take place, we have to build a foundation, and make it strong. That's why I'm mentioning these things. After that, after they know about these things, they will be able to understand our people because they will understand our language. In that way they'll know that it's good and because of that, they'll be smarter, they'll be smarter than us. Maybe in that way, in the

future they will live well. After that, they'll be whatever they want to be. Some might want to work for God. Some might make good songs with their voices, that might happen. There are lots of things for them to work on. Those white people know things about their land because they work on their land. Dogrib people can do that too. They can make something valuable, so that's why we're talking for them. If you return to your homes, you who are the elders, don't ask for money but talk to our children. Help the children, support them and maybe it will be better for them. If you tell them, this is what we are supposed to help you with, maybe they will become smarter because of that. If one person can have the best of two cultures, things will be better for us. Our people will become stronger. They will become braver. They will be braver for the task that is here for them. So from here on, with all our words, with all our minds, with all our strength, we have to build that foundation. That is what I want and that is why I'm saying this. That is all I wanted to say to you. Masi!

HARRY SIMPSON: Since I started last year, I don't know where the Divisional Board office is located.

JOHN B. ZOE: In Edzo, at the school.

HARRY SIMPSON: I want to take back to Rae Lakes the agenda from this meeting, so that when we get back to our settlements and we have our meetings, I can let them know as quickly as possible everything we had discussions about here. If we did leave anything out here, the others may also tell us what is important and we can add it on. We will take their ideas and thoughts along with us because what we are aiming for is something that is good.

The other thing I have been thinking about a great deal is this videotape of our Old Chief, Jimmy Bruneau. That videotape made us think about the past and made us think about the future for our children. If you could make copies of this videotape of Chief Bruneau's speech and distribute it to us, it will be good, because we can show it at our meetings when we get together; and also we could leave it at our schools. So if you could do that for us, it will be good. We have had a good discussion and I just wanted to ask you about those two things. From now on, we really have to keep on trying and only in that way will things turn out better for us. So after we've finished our meeting here and have returned home, we have to get together with our people and have our meetings about this. Sometimes the elders have begun to listen to our meetings now. It's mostly elders now. Sometimes when we get together for meetings like this, we go on until about midnight. We talk about "our ways" too. So I just wanted to ask you about those two things and that's all. Masi cho!

JOHN B. ZOE: We don't want to leave anything out from the taping of this meeting, that is why we are recording it. Later on, it will be transcribed and typed. Phillip Rabesca will do that because he's been here with us and he's doing the recording. He's going to transcribe it all and it will become a report. In twenty years, if they're meeting like this again, they will talk about these things by following this report and this videotape will still be here. We didn't know it was available, but the Board office staff searched and searched for it. They called to Yellowknife and to Fort Smith but it was not available. Suddenly, last Friday, they found it. They didn't know what was on that tape when they located it. It was on an old type of videotape and they couldn't find a machine that worked well enough to play it. They had to look all over for an old machine that still worked! They found two old dusty machines in Fort Smith and they had to get them on an airplane

to Yellowknife. One of the machines did not work but they tried the other one and fortunately it worked. On Monday they transferred all those tapes to VHS tapes so we could use them in our meeting. So that tape arrived here one night before our meeting started. It is hard to say by whose will this has happened, but the tape was located, transferred onto video tape and now it is available to us. We will make one copy for each settlement and you can take it back with you. Joe Tobie is going to talk to us for awhile in Dogrib.

JOE TOBIE: I have never talked at a school board meeting before. Sometimes you have probably seen me sitting with my tape recorder at land claims meetings but I've never talked at a meeting like this before. I was told there was going to be a school board workshop here, and that there was nobody around from Dettah so we were told maybe one or two elders should attend. I wasn't doing any work so I told them, I'll go with them. I have listened to you talk yesterday and this morning and there have been a lot of good old timer's stories.

I've been thinking if they had video cameras back in 1921 when they made that treaty, we could have known today what they all said. But it wasn't like that, so we don't know. However in the next 100 years, our words will still be written down from this meeting. People then will be able to listen to our words too and that is good because you are having a good discussion indeed. You who are on the school board have been trying to settle this issue of not doing away with our peoples' ways. What you are all saying is really correct. It is very important to teach our children our own language. If some young people know how to read and write, they also become involved in writing our language in the roman orthography. Some young people have been working on that now. If we ask the government for funding, maybe they will listen to us and help us teach this orthography to our children. As it is now, some people take their children in the bush and teach them to make fire, and to work in the bush. They teach the children all these things. They probably do that during daytime and in the evening they probably tell them stories. If they pray, it's that way too. Maybe they do that during wintertime or summertime but sometimes it gets impossible to go out anywhere. So we cut fire wood, sit inside, tell each other stories and that's it. In that kind of situation, it would be good if they had a teacher to go with them. They teach them how to talk, how to name certain things and how to do their work. If the children learn how to read and write in their own language, then they will not forget their language. If that's not possible, we can talk to them, we can teach them how to name certain things. That way they'll learn by themselves, too. If they were to carry their books along, they would learn how to name things by following their books, too. They'll remember because we talked to them and they will probably not let go of their language. Since it is "our ways", we who are the Dene, we cannot let go of it. So we have to teach the children those ways, and teach them well.

Mrs. Elizabeth Mackenzie said we have to try to get the best of two cultures. She is right. We must really try to do that. Sometimes we do understand English words but when we sit among white people at their meetings, we don't always understand what they are saying. They often use words when they speak that we do not understand. When I went to school I only went to grade four, so I do not understand when they use big words like that. About ten years ago I worked with white people when they had the pipeline inquiry. At that time Judge Berger and the lawyers were holding these inquiries, and they used legal words every day. After they finished the inquiries, I worked with them for another two years. After that was completed, I told them I only went to grade four a long time ago but now that I

have worked with them for the past two years, I must have reached grade thirty! If we do go to meetings, we can listen and pick out words here and there and that's how we teach ourselves. Just because we are the elders, it does not mean we have stopped learning. We are sitting here now and we are teaching each other.

We are all like teachers. We pick up some words from others who speak. If we think about it, we pick it up and learn from it. So if there are some meetings, it will be good if we are there, attending and listening to the meeting and whatever we have to work on, sometimes it's like we have to go to school for it. For example, we have had these two days of meetings and it is as if we have been in school. It is as if we have been teachers for each other, through talking and teaching each other. So maybe we think we're not going to school, but through attending this meeting, we are going to school. I feel grateful because we have had these two days of meetings.

As for our language, it is important to teach our children. Yesterday Lucy Lafferty mentioned that the school is teaching them for one hour once a week. She said that is not enough and she is right. They attend school five days a week, so if they are taught our language at least one hour a day that will be five hours a week. Teaching our language will also include reading and writing in Dogrib. In that way they will not lose their language.That will be better.

Now because of television many children do not speak in their language. It is like that in Yellowknife and Dettah; nothing at all. The little children don't speak to anyone because they don't speak in their language. Their mothers and fathers don't speak to their children and if they do speak, it's always in English. So how could the children learn their language? Some children may understand but they can't talk in their language. If I asked, a little child to pick something up for us in our language, they would just look at us. If we ask them "What's the matter, pick that up for me," they reply, "What?" in English because they don't understand our language.

When I retired from work, I used to go all over among the people. In places like Lac La Martre and Rae Lakes, the children spoke their language and I used to like that. In Snowdrift about five years ago, the little children spoke in Chipewyan. Their language sounded so beautiful. I really liked that. Now if you go over there, the little children seldom speak in their language, just mostly in English. It is because of T.V.; it must be because of T.V. and also because their mothers and fathers don't speak to them in their own language. I wonder how it would be if they went out in the bush. There's no T.V.there; they have bush radios and cassette tape recorders and they can listen to those.

I came just to listen to you at this meeting, but since we're being recorded, I felt that if I didn't say anything, someone will tell me, " I thought you went over there? Why didn't we hear your voice and where were you?" So that's why I just had to say these few words to you for awhile. That's all and thank you.

JOSEPH PE'A: We didn't need interpreters to have this meeting but we all understood each other in Dogrib. We talked about all our ways and when we ask our Creator for help, our minds and our hearts become one. Our Creator has heard us during these past two days we truly have been one in mind and one in heart . It's almost 3:00 o'clock and we'll be finished soon. So thank you for these two days of meetings. I just wanted to tell you that.

JOE MANTLA: I would like to talk for a little while. We've had this meeting and we're doing very well. We're working on something that is good. We've heard what the elder has said on the video tape (Chief Jimmy Bruneau). He talked about teaching our ways and since he made his speech, he has died, and now in all our settlements we have schools and in all our schools, it is up to us. It is now up to us to teach our children.

We are saying let us include both our culture, our ways, and the white culture, white ways, in the school curriculum for the children. That is what we are meeting about and saying.

Our people should talk to their children and say, "My child, this is the way we should live. Why do you live the way that you do, on this land?" Parents should say that to them and retrain them. The white person is no longer going to come to us and tell us, you should have your meetings like this and do these things like that. We have to do these things on our own and when they say that, it is only true. So I am grateful because we have had an important discussion. We feel thankful to each other and maybe we will not be the only ones who feel that way, because when we get back to the ones we left at home, they will probably say that too. Maybe we didn't bring anything back to them or give them anything, but they will say thank you because we did some work on something that was very important. Our discussions have been good and they have been right. So that's all I wanted to mention. Masi.

JOHN P. MICHEL: That is good. That's why we came here to have these two days of meetings. We didn't have disagreements with each other. We say good things and we also include thank you too. It has been said when we say thank you, when it passes through our mouth, it stays in our minds and thank you has been mentioned many times. Let's hope our thank you's are not there for nothing. I would like to tell you a story about Jimmy Rabesca's father who we called "Metis", and then we can finish. That person, he was never talked down. One time, we had a gathering in Jimmy's father's house, and everyone teased him but he always talked himself out of every situation. My brother Pierre Mantla especially teased him but he was really nothing to Jimmy's father. I was sitting there and he was sitting close to me. Pierre sat here and Louie Beaulieu sat on the other side. So they put us in the middle and maybe they did that on purpose. They told me, "If he's going to make a joke, he probably won't beat anybody, so talk to him." So everyone kept teasing him and he kept talking himself out. Later I told him, "Bruno". He replied "What?". So I said, "Nobody liked you. Nobody should live with the K'wee's daughter or sit on her but you have been and you're not supposed to do that." Somebody like me can say that and it's only right, I told him. And he really looked at my mouth as I spoke. "I wasn't the one who asked for a woman when I got a woman," I told him. "The woman asked for me," I told him. And he really looked at my mouth! "The woman asked for me and told me to choose her and she kept asking me but at first I didn't say anything," I told him. She asked me two times, so I told her, "If you really want me, take off all your clothes. Take off your clothes and walk all around me and if you're of age, then I'll choose you." " So that's what the woman did to me and that's why I chose her," I told him. He swore and said "You are the devil's advocate! You are no good and have made me swear badly. You will never make any use of her," he said. (joking). He was that sort of a person. He always managed to talk himself out of any situation when we teased him.

ELIZABETH QUITTE: Before we finish, there's something that Elizabeth Mackenzie mentioned and the others haven't said anything about. She said something about a remembrance day for Chief Jimmy Bruneau. Here in Fort Rae, there were two great chiefs, Jimmy Bruneau and Monfwi. Maybe we'll never see a video tape of Monfwi, but I have one picture of him, my grandfather. Maybe you could take a picture of that and put them onto slides, and then onto video tapes. After he's on video, also include Old Chief Bruneau, the way he made his speech, and if they make a holiday in his honour, then it will be a good day to show that video tape of both of them. Down south, a lot of soldiers have died in the past when they had wars, so in their honor they have "Remembrance Day" and we remember them on that day. So I've been thinking, we should do that here in Fort Rae for Old Chief Jimmy Bruneau, because he's done so many really nice things for us. Maybe we could do that in the summer, in June or July, before the people go to Lac St. Anne. It is up to you. If you want to do it, after muskrat hunting season is over, it's up to you. Elizabeth talked about it and for me, I'm really happy about it. He still has lots of relatives living and a lot of elders are still living with whom he spoke, and they can speak in his honour. We should have a big feast for him and hold a big dance. It's going to be good. That's what I think and I'm happy about it.

JIMMY B. RABESCA : There are two small items I would like to ask you about. Elizabeth mentioned that when the Dogrib Divisional School Board has their meetings, elders should be present. They want one elder to be present from the five communities. The board members want the elders to be with the school board members, so they could support them. The elders will be flown in with the board members and be with them. I really like that idea. They will be with the school board for support. And also, as far as Old Chief Bruneau is concerned, we have talked a lot about him. The Lord has to help us with the tasks he has asked us to accomplish on this land and to make what we want to be made, it takes money. But is it expensive, I wonder? We want a "statue" to be made of Old Chief Bruneau, as he was so we can have one standing in the school in Edzo and one standing in the church. If we did that I wonder how it will be. Whoever makes these types of statues, maybe he will make it expensive. I wonder how it is. So if we have him standing in church all the people will look at him and because of that, they will think about themselves. As well, anybody who comes to our land will look at him and it will be as if he's alive. So maybe because of him, God might help us, that's what I think about. Those are two things I wanted to ask about.

All these people have talked and they meant well. We have each given many good words. As I sit here at this table, I hope those words don't just stay here like that. We enjoyed being with you and staying with you. We had good meetings and we didn't have anyone drinking while we had this meeting. We had good discussions; no white person was among us. If we had been doing this long ago, it could have been good. That's what I think. Our words could have been strong. It could have been like Old Chief Bruneau's ways. We have taken those ways back out now and hopefully things will turn out better for us. For example, I told you during the day that the first word my small child said was a bad word and we are now saying, let's not let things happen that way again. That is all I'm going to say and thank you.

ALBERT NITSIZA: I'm the chairman for the school in Lac La Martre and I have helped to do all these things for them, so our children can be taught about religion, Dogrib prayers and how to work in the bush. I attended the school here in Edzo when Chief Bruneau spoke about how things should be. I attended that school for

five years. They used to bring in students from all five communities. When the plane landed in Lac La Martre, there was nobody in there, so I got in and also one of Menton Mantla's sons. So just the two of us came in by plane, at that time, they had dorm parents in the resident wings. There were just the two of us, so the teacher said, "It can't be like this. You will have to live with somebody because it is a big building and just the two of you can't sleep there." So we had to live with somebody in town. When the school was opened in Edzo, I was about nine years old.

Everything you're talking about is all true for me too. You've mentioned we should have two statues made of Old Chief Bruneau, one in the school and one in church and that we should proclaim a holiday in his honour. You've also said, "Let's have one elder from each community at our meetings." We'll be having our next meeting in Dettah, after Christmas. So prior to that meeting, the Executive Committee of the Dogrib Divisional Board of Education can settle that. If we all agree and say yes, then, we can choose one from each community and then Jim Martin will telephone all of you to select one elder. Since I was sitting here listening, I can't just say nothing so I thought I would say a few words, and that is about all I wanted to mention. Thank you.

HELEN TOBIE: Right now, the children are getting their education and it's really good. Sometimes when the children get a little bit bigger, they intimidate the ones that are smaller. Sometimes they will punch or shove them around and their parents say your child has done this or that to another child. It's no sense getting mad at them for that and that is why I say this to my children, "I don't send you to school so that you can shove others around and get smart at them. As soon as you enter that school, you have to listen to your teacher and do what you are told to do. Even here at home when we ask you to do something, you must do it. That's the way you have to work, as you're going to school." If we say things like that and talk to them, maybe they will think we are right and they will quit doing bad things. But because some children haven't been talked to, they fight others, and the older ones get cheeky with each other. So that's why some children end up hating school. They are afraid because other children intimidate them. Some parents want the teachers to talk to their children about these things but if the teacher tells the other parents, they end up getting mad and saying, "My kids will not be going to school again!" I have heard a lot of them say that. They are not supposed to say that but they do. If we tell someone about the poor behaviour of their children, they have to take the responsibility to talk to their own child. We can't talk to the children for them. If they don't talk to their children, the children will think, " My mother is glad I am doing these things so I am going to keep on doing it more." Some will think like that. But if their parents do talk to them, they will think, "I am not doing as my mother wishes and she did not send me to school to do these things." They will think that way and start to consider these things. They will learn by these examples. If my child tells me the teacher was angry with them, I'll tell them, "It's probably your fault. If you don't obey when you are asked to do something the teachers will get angry at you. If you're not like that and do what you're asked to do, and if you do what's right, then no teacher will ever get angry at you." That's how we have to teach our children. We have to teach them the way our parents have taught us.

Sometimes when we used to wake up in the mornings, our elders asked us to do something before we ate. They didn't only just ask the boys to do these things; they used to ask the girls too. That's the way it used to be in the past. We had to saw wood using hand saws but now, you use these chain saws and you pull the cord

and it starts. It wasn't like that before. You had to saw wood by hand. After that you had to take pails to the lake and in the winter, chisel a hole in the ice and haul water. After that we had to go to the nets and take out the fish. All these things our relatives taught us to do. It used to be hard work but our relatives used to tell us, if you sleep long, you will not live long. They must have been right. I remember these things from when I was a young girl. As there was no television, I used to go to bed around eleven o'clock. When grandfather used to be alive, I could hear him putting logs into the woodstove around six in the morning and so I would get up. I would sit beside him and when tea was boiled, he'd pour it in a big cup, and put lots of sugar in it. I still remember how good it tasted.

My mother didn't give me tea. That's how our mothers raised us in the past. They told us, "Sugar is not good for you so you shouldn't drink tea." That is why I got up in the mornings while she slept, so I could drink tea. I would get up fast when grandfather made tea so he would give me some and I would cook fish on the stove for him. After he ate, he would give me the other half. Around nine o'clock my brother would still be sleeping and grandfather would say; "Yes, I would step over that one that's still sleeping for he will never see his grey hairs." He'd say that and I used to wonder what grandfather was saying but he was right because my brother never saw his grey hairs and he died without being sick. And that's how things used to be.

Now if we tell our children to get up in the mornings, it's very hard for them. They can't get up even when it is time to go to school. They sleep so long in the morning because they stay up too late at night. They watch television, and hang around town until late at night. It wasn't like that in the past. When evening came and it got dark our parents didn't want anybody to go out, because that was when everything that is terrible roams around. Now I'm afraid when it's night time but today we don't talk to the children about these things so they go out at night and they are still gone very late at night. That's why they sleep so long in the mornings. The way our people raised us in the past is very different from the way the children are being raised now. It is very hard.

Long after my grandfather passed away, I woke up in the morning, around six o'clock. I made a small fire because if I made a big one, my mother would feel warm and get up. So I made a small one and then I got dressed and went outside. I tied some things to a small sled and pulled it out on the lake. It was still dark but the moon was full and I could see a little bit. I checked the net all alone and pulled a loaded sled back to the door of our house. My mother was still sound asleep, so I brought in the fish I thought was good to eat but by opening and closing the door, my mother woke up. She said, "What are you doing?" I said, "What am I doing? I'm just bringing in fish I think is good". She asked, "Where did you get the fish from in this darkness?". "Where do you think I got the fish from? I went to check the net," I told her. She said, "That's strange; I thought you were still sleeping". And that's the way we have worked in the past but today, children will never do that, not at all. Our parents raised us well and as we live the way they taught us, we too will live well.

Once in Dettah I saw Mrs. Crooked Hand sawing some wood. My small child watched with me and said how pitiful she looked cutting and splitting the wood. He said he couldn't ever remember me sawing or splitting wood. So I told him, "That's strange for you to say because I have done that kind of work way before you were born. Now that you're old enough to do that work, I will not do it for you, because I have done it before for you, and now you have to do it for me. If

you're out someplace and there is nobody to cut and split wood then I will do that. As for her, she's probably doing that work because her son is not there. If he was home, she wouldn't be doing that." Our children are funny because they think we have never done any kind of work like that before. They don't learn about that in school or they would know about how hard our people have worked. They only know how things are today in school, but that is good too, because they are learning to read and write.

Some parents say that they themselves can teach their own children, but it seems as if we can't do things that way any more. The way the children are being taken out on the land now and being taught seems to be the only good way, because their teachers can go with them. They can teach them whatever they are supposed to be learning and if it's done that way, it will be better. Some say their parents or relatives can teach them. But I think it will be harder that way. If they don't obey their parents, they will not do what they are told to do, but if they are with the teachers because they are being taught lessons, they will do what is supposed to be done. So that is better, but some say otherwise.

That's how it is and what I think. There are many stories but we are kind of tired, so that's all I have to say to you all. Thank you.

MARCEL ZOE: You're discussing education and for me you're talking correctly. My friend George Mackenzie used to teach the children about our ways, but he is no longer doing that, teaching the children mostly in the whitemans' ways instead. Elizabeth mentioned we should have a holiday to remember Chief Jimmy Bruneau and for me, that is only right. When I was small, the church bell used to ring at five o'clock in the evening and the children would go to church. Now it is five o'clock in the afternoon, the church bell is ringing, and not a single child is going that way. I don't see them. Now, the children attend school but they don't attend church. Even on Sunday's, hardly any children attend. I think it would be better if the priest held a mass in the school. Also we named the adult education centre, where Mary Koyina works now, after Monfwi. The children who will be going to school in Rae next year will be going to the Elizabeth Mackenzie Elementary School taking kindergarten to grade six there. As for the school in Edzo, they will be taking grade seven to grade eleven there. I also think they are right to make a statue of Chief Jimmy Bruneau and find a big rock, and make that statue stand outside on that rock. I think it will be good if it is done that way.

That's all I wanted to say. Thank you.

BERNADETTE MARTIN: I would just like to say, thank you to all of you. We who came from Dettah had a good meeting with you. We heard lots of good old timer stories. Back home my father is not going to tell me this is the way things were. I have sat here among you and I have heard you all talk and I feel grateful. When I get back home, I will tell them everything you have said. I do not work with the school board anymore but work in the school. So when you have your next meeting it ll probably be in Dettah and we will see you again. I wasn't going to come over here but since George Charlo wasn't around, I was asked to go with them and that's why I came along. You have had a really good meeting, so I feel really thankful. That's all. Thank you.

JOHN B. ZOE: When we saw the videotape of old Chief Bruneau making his speech at the opening of the school in Edzo, he said, "Nobody told me to say

what I had to say but I have said it." So in the same way, it was like that here. Nobody translated for us and we didn't tell each other what to say.

He also said he asked for something by using his head. And now, you're using your heads. So for the future, it's as if we have made a building and now we're putting something in there. We had a really good meeting. It's not hard work; listening to each other does not count as work but we learn and teach each other by our words. So now we'll be finishing off with prayers and prayer songs. By watching us do this our children will think about themselves and they will know how their people do things. And so now, if you want to end this meeting, there are drums over there for the ones who want to sing the prayer songs for us. And after they have finished, if one elder leads us in our closing prayer then it will be good. We'll have Elizabeth lead us in prayers, after they have finished the prayer songs. Thank you.

Closing prayer-songs by Jimmy Rabesca of Lac La Martre, Johnny Eyakfwo of Snare Lake and Harry Simpson of Rae Lakes.

Closing prayers led by Mrs. Elizabeth MacKenzie.

Appendices

Transcript from the video of Chief Jimmy Bruneau's speech on the occasion of the official opening of the new Edzo school, January 9th, 1972.

Summary of John B. Zoe's flipchart presentation to the "Strong Like Two People" meeting at the Friendship Centre in Rae, November 14th, 1990.

Themes from Roundrock Lake Meeting in August 1989 and the Friendship Centre meeting, November 1990.

The Mission Statement, goals and objectives of the Dogrib Divisional Board of Education approved by the representatives of the five Dogrib communities on January 22nd, 1991 in Dettah, NWT.

Appendix 1

Transcript from the video of Chief Jimmy Bruneau's speech on the occasion of the official opening of the new Edzo school, January 9th, 1972.

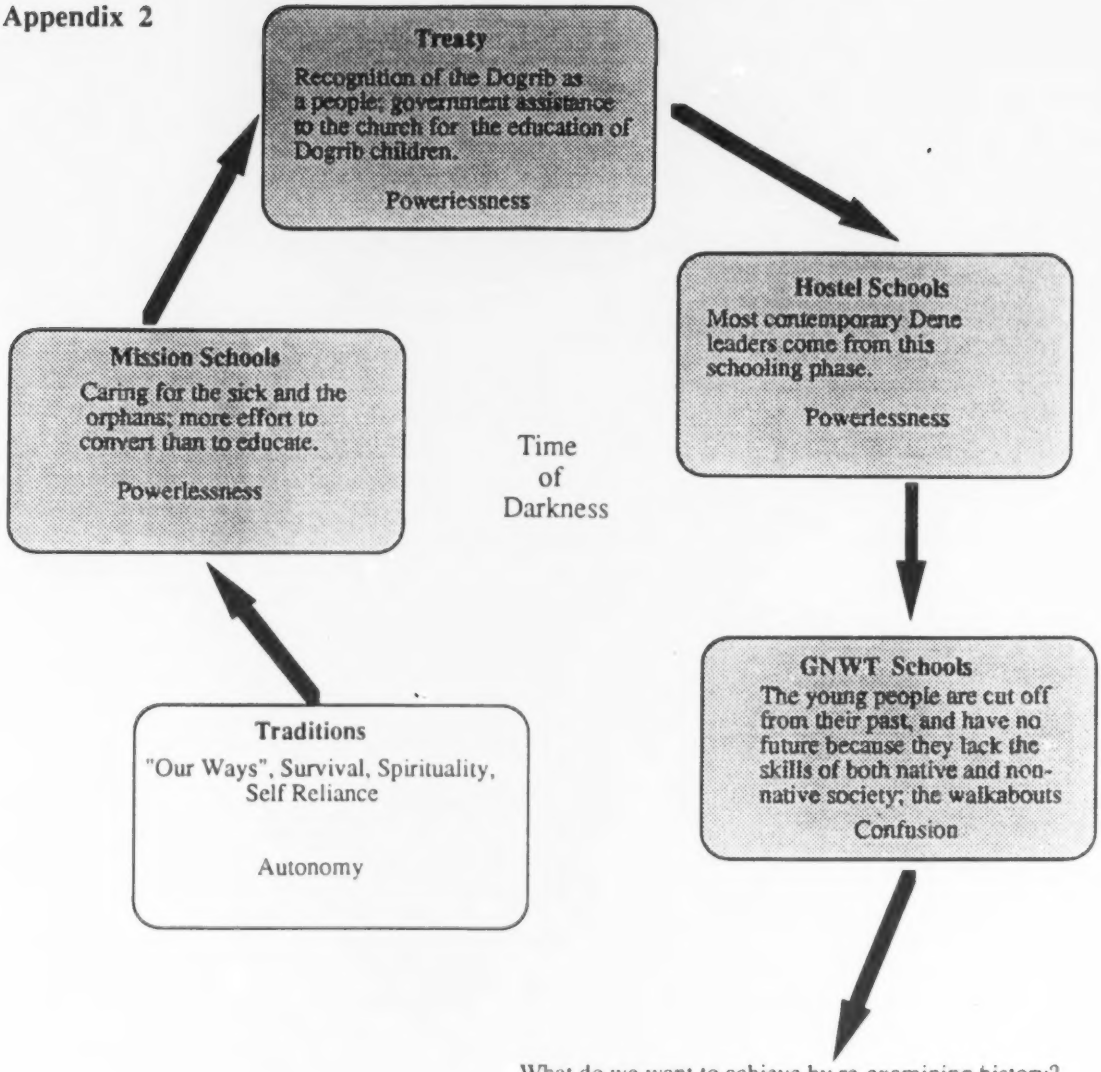
Editor's note: Chief Jimmy Bruneau was very ill on the occasion of the school opening and did not speak for very long. His words were related to other things he had said to his people in the past. To those who knew him, and heard him speak, his speech was meaningful because of the context in which they were able to place his words. This brief transcript is taken both from the video and from a note of the event written by Father Jean Pochat.

CHIEF JIMMY BRUNEAU: I have asked for this school and this school has been built according to my words. I have listened to my elders, elders such as Monfwi. I have listened to the way they talked. I have listened to their ways and now I am speaking according to their ways.

I have asked for this school to be built on my land, and that school will be run by my people, and my people will work at that school and our children will learn both ways, our ways and the whitemens' way.

For now I have been sick and I am very weak so I cannot talk for long. Nobody said I could not speak my own mind and make my own decisions...

Appendix 2


Treaty
Recognition of the Dogrib as a people; government assistance to the church for the education of Dogrib children.
Powerlessness
Hostel Schools
Most contemporary Dene leaders come from this schooling phase.
Powerlessness
Mission Schools
Caring for the sick and the orphans; more effort to convert than to educate.
Powerlessness
Time of Darkness
GNWT Schools
The young people are cut off from their past, and have no future because they lack the skills of both native and non-native society; the walkabouts
Confusion
Traditions
"Our Ways", Survival, Spirituality, Self Reliance
Autonomy
What do we want to achieve by re-examining history?
The struggle for cultural reintegration.
Dogrib Divisional Board of Education
The development of a mission statement to integrate two systems. People from each "perspective" have to learn from one another and help each other go on...

"EDUCATION INTO CULTURE, NOT CULTURE INTO EDUCATION"
...New Zealand Maori Elder

Presentation by John B. Zoe at the meeting to develop a Mission Statement for the Dogrib Divisional Board of Education, November 14th, 1990 at the Friendship Centre, Rae.

Appendix 3/4

themes

parental control
continuity into the future

where we've been
as a people

loss of control
dependence
social issues of family, culture, language and community

local control
independence
continuity with the past

where we are going
as a people

first principles
for the Board...

knowledge and learning

skills for work

values to live by

relationships to the land

relationships to God

realtionships to the community and the elders

the importance of our language

DOGRIB DIVISIONAL BOARD OF EDUCATION
MISSION STATEMENT

For thousands of years Dogrib parents taught their children through the activities of their daily lives. Children learned the skills they needed to survive and the values they needed to live in harmony within their families, their community and with the land. Our people took pride in passing on our knowledge, skills and values to our children and in the excellence of their education our survival as a people was assured.

In this century we became dependent on the government and the church to educate our children and in this loss of control, we find that our families, the community, language and culture are threatened. Our very survival as a people is at stake. Thus...

We, the members of the Dogrib Divisional Board of Education are committed to the development of an educational system that will return control of education to the parents, support them in their task as the first educators of their children, and teach the knowledge and skills our children need to survive today, and the values they need to live in harmony with their families, our communities and our land.

To ensure this the Board of Education is committed to:

1) ensure that our schools are places of knowledge and learning where our children will be challenged with expectations of excellence.

2) ensure that our children will have the necessary skills to create, participate in and control the new economic, political and social structures envisioned with the settlement of our land claims with the Government of Canada.

3) ensure that our schools will reflect the positive values that have sustained us as a people.

4) ensure our children learn the ways of the land.

5) ensure that our children learn to respect their Creator.

6) ensure that our children learn obedience and respect for their elders and in doing so learn to serve their community .

7) ensure that the Dogrib language is sustained as the primary means for the expression of our values, knowledge and traditional skills.